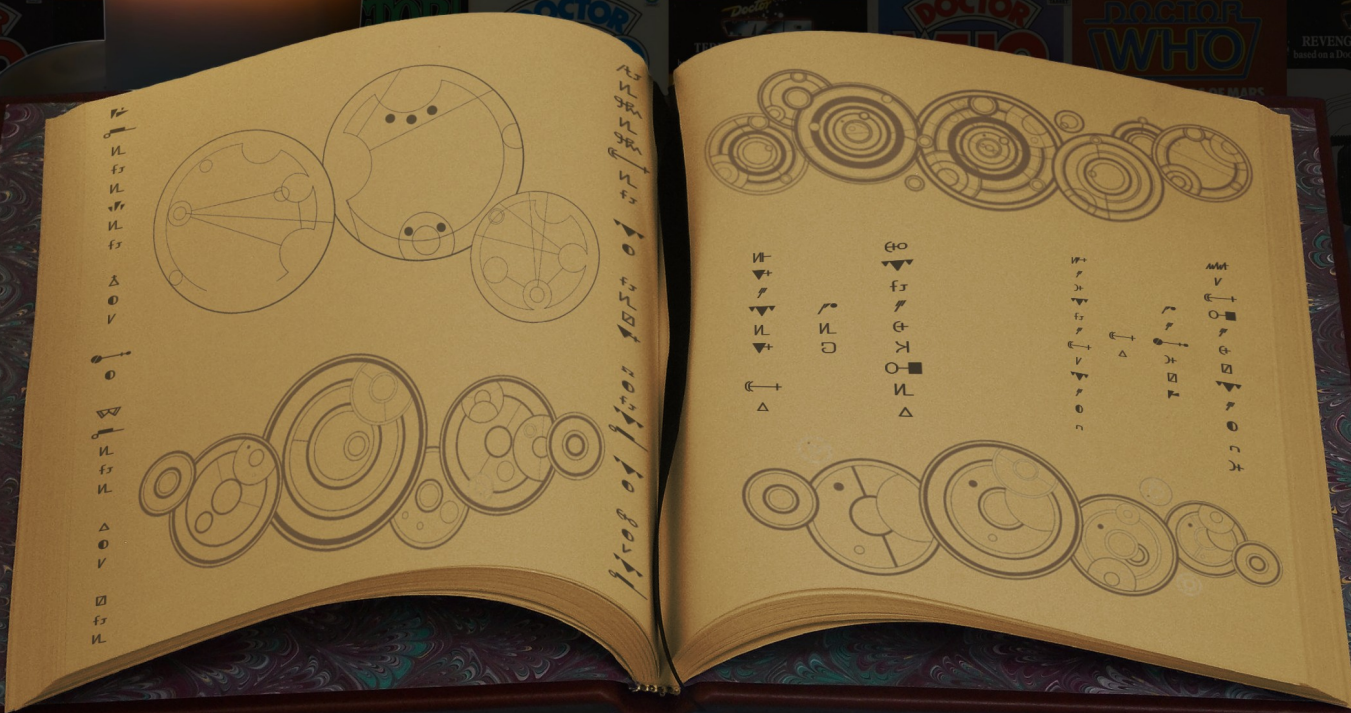
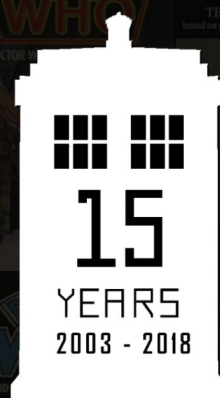


ISSUE 32 · MAY 2018

# WHOTOPIA



## READING

DOUGLAS ADAMS DOES DOCTOR WHO

## BETWEEN

COOKING IN THE TARDIS

## THE LINES

Memories of Amnesia  
Dan Tessier reflects on the EDA's

Rick Cross  
Matthew Kresal speaks to the  
Candy Jar Books author

Looking at Covers  
Hamish Crawford takes a tour  
of the series' bookcover artworks



# PARALLEL MATTERS :: PARALLEL MATTERS

BY JEZ STRICKLEY

However much *Doctor Who* has been subject to criticism, its artful merchandising has been all-but bulletproof. There have been some false starts along the way (a 1980s TARDIS tent for starters), but in the main the BBC, and later its subsidiary, BBC Enterprises, has steadily and successfully milked the series for all it's worth. The mid-1960s saw Dalekmania toys and a brace of big screen outings, but by the mid-1970s it was Target Books which was taking command of the merchandise field, giving the series a literary foundation years before VHS, DVD, Blu-Ray etc. became the fan's go-to Matrix Databank for accessing the show's past.

It was a foundation that could withstand merchandising muddles, such as the odd cookbook collection and a crisp packet mini-comic giveaway (one of my all-time favourite 1980s publicity stunts). Even a decent shot at a *Star Wars*-inspired *Doctor Who* playset in the late-1980s couldn't put a dent in the power of the book to transform countless children's bedrooms into Gallifreyan bibliocophaga (not a word, but somehow I think it fits – I feel the influence of a certain *Doctor Who* script editor on my

very young mind coming to the fore).

Yes, it's the humble book, factual or fictional, text-based or comic strip, which has come to dominate the last five-plus decades of *Doctor Who*, preserving and extending the series for generations of fans. In recent years, these literary escapades have migrated from the hardcopy bookstore to the Kindle tablet in the blink of an Amazon-powered digital eye. It's an information revolution of the Time Lord kind.

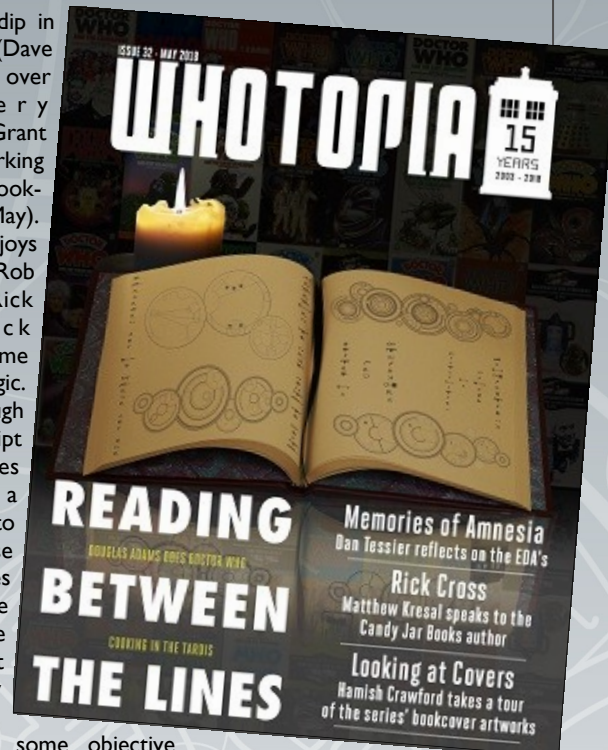
Let's weave a narrative of our own, then. Delve inside and you'll find the aroma of second-hand books and dashes of Cantabrian humour (Jessica Chaleff). How does being drawn into visual wonderscapes, complete with the risk of interchangeable sci-fi icons take you (Hamish Crawford)? What about puzzling over the journey from screen to page and all that's lost or gained inbetween (Nick Mellish)? There are masterly page-turners, book reviews, and a Doctor more often imagined than seen (Daniel Tessier). Language games and a growing horde of analyses (Andrew Screen), plus a tour of *Doctor Who*'s history via a 1980s reference book giant (Richard Michaels). Before too

long we're hip dip in model-making (Dave Etches), pouring over a cookery extravaganza (Grant Bull), and marking out time in book-form (David P. May). Uncovering the joys of writing (Rob Mammone, Rick Cross, Nick Mellish) makes me feel very nostalgic. Nostalgic enough to devour a script editor's diaries and reframe a Doctor's era into the bargain. Rose-tinted spectacles are par for the course where our most recent Doctorly farewell is

concerned, but some objective bookending of past and present, amidst shadows of the future (Jon Arnold, Matthew Kresal and James P. Quick) may yet lend even the most cynical in our midst some well deserved pause for thought.

It's quite a tale in the making.

Before closing, I'd like to give a special mention to a recently



uncovered review of *The Gunfighters* (1966) written by the late Gary Phillips. Discovering this insightful article brought back a lot of fond memories of Gary. It's very special to have his byline appear in Whotopia again.

Until next time.

| Jez Strickley, Editor

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# MEMORIES OF AMNESIA

LOOKING BACK AT THE EIGHTH DOCTOR'S ADVENTURES

**“The Doctor was the finest dreams of hundreds of human beings, refined as they tapped away at their typewriters.”**

*The Gallifrey Chronicles, Lance Parkin*

When it comes to the novels, most fans cite the Target novelisations or the New Adventures as the most significant line. It's true, those two ranges are particularly influential and are fondly remembered by thousands of fans. Their influence can be seen in the television series today, both in the choice of writers and the content and direction of the Doctor's story. There have been scores of articles written on them. When it comes to *Doctor Who*'s third major novel line, however, it's harder to find a champion.

I came to *Doctor Who* in the 1990s on the back of the TV Movie. Discovering the history of the series through videos, novelisations and Virgin Books was exhilarating. Still, while it was new to me, these stories were clearly of the past, featuring seven Doctors who belonged to the history of the series. I'd just come aboard. Paul McGann was my Doctor. The BBC Books line was current, still being released, and continually developing. In no small





part, the Eighth Doctor Adventures were *Doctor Who* for me.

It's understandable that the EDAs never made the same kind of impact as the New Adventures. For one thing, there were multiple lines at the time with equal claim to being the continuation of *Doctor Who*. *Doctor Who Magazine* had a weight of history to it, and had built up a distinct identity. Big Finish started later, but had actual actors from the series performing dramatised *Doctor Who*, and managed to get McGann himself involved again in 2000. Other factors worked against the range; many fans and authors were unhappy about the BBC using the TV Movie as an opportunity to wrest the novel rights back from Virgin. Equally, the film itself had not been uniformly well-received, and many fans had limited interest in following the Eighth Doctor at all.

None of this meant anything to me at

concepts, but which could fall flat in the execution. There were several big event novels which were rarely as impactful as they were hyped up to be. But within the generic adventures and the drawn-out storylines there were some remarkable works of fiction.

True, the line got off to a poor start from the ordinarily reliable Terrance Dicks, who provided, in *The Eight Doctors*, perhaps the most unambitious and derivative *Doctor Who* novel of the 1990s. This novel spent more time on obscure points of continuity than in introducing the new companion, Sam Jones. The second novel, *Vampire Science*, did the hard work of fleshing out her character, and provided much needed characterisation for the Eighth Doctor, building on the TV Movie. Indeed, authors Jon Blum and Kate Orman were perhaps the writers most concerned with building on the foundations of the film. *Vampire Science* was partially written with

*Who* banner. Only Paul Magrs could get away with a book that sported a hot pink cover illustrated with a poodle holding a cigarette and a gun, and somehow, what was inside *Mad Dogs* and *Englishmen* was even more outrageous.

Dave Stone's *The Slow Empire* drips with his own brand of peculiar humour and hinges on a truly terrible pun. *The Crooked World*, by Steve Lyons, is unique in being set in a Looney Tunes-inspired cartoon world, something that should not work in prose but somehow not only works but becomes a genuinely affecting tale of morality with real emotional heft. Jonathan Morris gave us *Anachrophobia*, a story with temporal weirdness and disturbing imagery that would make Steven Moffat doff his hat in admiration, and later *The Tomorrow Windows*, which manages to pastiche the style of Douglas Adams but still feels fresh, funny and relevant. In *The Book of the*

*Jonathan Morris gave us Anachrophobia, a story with temporal weirdness and disturbing imagery that would make Steven Moffat doff his hat in admiration...*

the time. By the time the EDAs were wrapped up, *Doctor Who* was back on TV and I was a card-carrying *Who* obsessive. To begin with, though, the EDA range was the flagship of a flotilla of exciting adventures. At seventy-three volumes released across eight years, the EDA range outstripped the New Adventures, and I read every one. To begin with, I picked them up sporadically, from libraries and bookshops. By the end, I was buying each bi-monthly book release as soon as I could get to the bookshop.

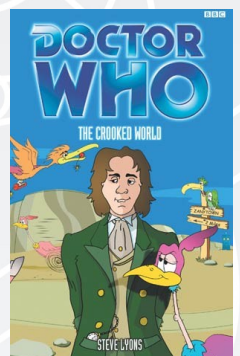
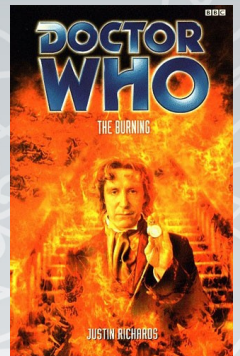
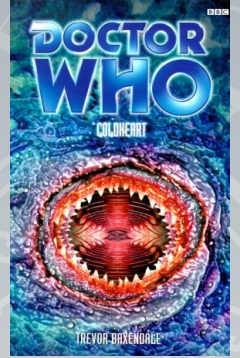
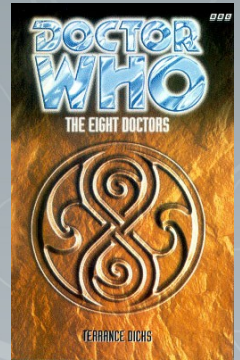
Looking back, there are plenty of problems with the range. There are as many misses as there are hits. The more routine, less remarkable novels have blurred together somewhat in my memory. I'd struggle to tell you much about what happened in *Coldheart* or *The Janus Conjunction*. The range played with a number of long-running story arcs, which began with interesting

Grace Holloway as a major character, before rights issues necessitated a rewrite (and indicator of the rush and confusion of the early days of BBC Books' acquisition of the licence). The couple penned a full sequel to the TV Movie, *Unnatural History*, two years later, which hugely expanded on Sam's background.

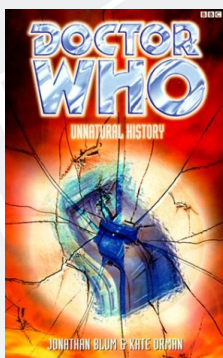
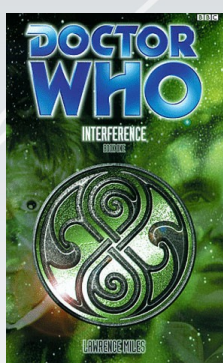
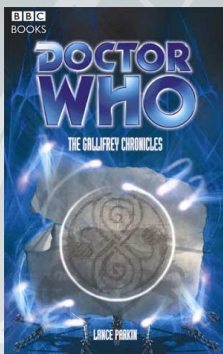
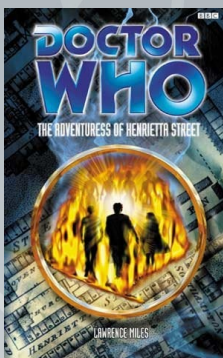
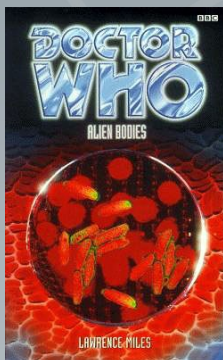
Other authors pushed the range in new and fascinating directions. The best books were the ones where the author's voice came through. There's no mistaking a Paul Magrs novel for the work of anyone else. *The Scarlet Empress* is a bizarre fairytale take on *Doctor Who* that brought Magrs' creation Iris Wildthyme into the series, making the EDAs twice as fun and ten times camper in one fell swoop. The follow-up, *The Blue Angel* (written with his partner Jeremy Hoad) is one of the most imaginative and elaborate novels to come out under the *Doctor*

*Still*, Paul Ebbs combines humour, horror and some ingenious temporal twisting to great effect. Martin Day's late-in-the-range *The Sleep of Reason* is a beautiful and emotionally real exploration of mental illness that is ultimately hugely rewarding.

The most influential writer in the range, though, was undoubtedly Lawrence Miles. There were some unpromising books early in the range, but Miles' *Alien Bodies* rocked the EDAs to their core and gave the line the identity it needed. *Alien Bodies* is a hugely imaginative take on *Doctor Who* that turns on a killer concept – that a devastatingly powerful relic that could turn the tide of a universal war is actually the Doctor's corpse from the far future. The book introduced concepts that would become essential to the EDAs, including the Faction Paradox, a cabal of rogue time travellers who pit themselves as







opposite to the Time Lords and revel in temporal chaos. As *Doctor Who* villains they are ideal, because they are only a step away from the Doctor himself. *Alien Bodies* also introduced the concept of a vast war across history that existed in the Doctor's personal future but rippled back through time to affect his present. This became the driving force behind the EDAs for the next thirty volumes.

Before the climax, Miles wrote the two-volume story *Interference*, a *tour-de-force* that played merry hell with *Doctor Who*'s own past, put the Doctor through a physical and emotional wringer and took the concept of regeneration to its very limit. With *Interference*, it was clear that the EDAs weren't afraid to tear up the rulebook of their parent series. Eventually, the weight of the future war was becoming too much and a line was drawn under it. Peter Anghelides and Stephen Cole's climactic novel *The Ancestor Cell* marked a turning point for the range, in which the Doctor, faced with a corrupt Time Lord race that was fast becoming as monstrous as its enemies, elected to destroy Gallifrey for good. While far from the best of the EDAs, *The Ancestor Cell* was one of the most significant of the range, leading to a new direction for the Doctor's adventures.

Beginning with Justin Richards' *The Burning*, the Doctor was left without any memory of his past, something which, along with Gallifrey's destruction, was intended to leave the EDAs with a clean slate, free from continuity. In practice, this was only a qualified success, but it did put the Doctor in genuinely reduced circumstances for a short range of books in which he spent a century living on Earth before he was able to renew his TARDIS and recover his companions. Paul Leonard's *The Turing Test* and Lance Parkin's gorgeous 1980s-set *Father Time*, which saw the Doctor enter into relationships that were entirely new to him, were the highlights of this short period.

One element that came through repeatedly in the EDAs was that, although he was still the Doctor without his memories, the hero of the range was lost without his companions. Sam was designed as the perfect companion for this idealistic, almost naïve Doctor, and was later revealed to be genuinely too

good to be true. Fitz, something of a down-and-out and a layabout, became the Eighth Doctor's most loyal and valued companion, sticking with him through life and death right to the end of the range. Compassion, introduced in *Interference*, was conceptually weird, but her eventual transformation into a living TARDIS was a wonderfully bizarre development (the Time Lords' desire to capture and forcibly breed from her was, however, a horrible tonal mistake). Anji Kapoor was intended to be a genuinely normal person, someone who wouldn't want to travel with the Doctor, and after some inconsistent characterisation early on, became a likeable presence in the post-*Ancestor Cell* EDAs. Finally, Trix, a con-artist and stowaway, was never fully explored before the range ended, but had the potential to be very interesting. It's a shame this was never quite realised.

Although Lawrence Miles was unhappy with the treatment of his concepts by other authors, he did return to the range once more with the truly fascinating *The Adventuress of Henrietta Street*, which involved the Doctor marrying a prostitute and losing his second heart, as he became rooted to the Earth in the absence of Gallifrey. This was not where readers expected the range to go when they read *The Eight Doctors*. It also introduced Sabbath, an intriguing new rival for the Doctor, a very human character who acted as a sort of anti-Time Lord in this new, Gallifrey-free universe. Miles eventually took his concepts away for his own (highly recommended) *Faction Paradox* range, but Sabbath remained the main antagonist of the EDAs through a sprawling sequence of books that crossed multiple timelines. While in this period the range's ambitions sometimes outstripped its execution, there were some fascinating ideas thrown around, and both new and old authors got to experiment with new concepts.

Through all of this, though, was the Eighth Doctor. Initially hard to pin down, pulled in different directions by different authors, the Eighth Doctor was often characterised more by what he was not than what he was. Writers would either pitch him as a generic Doctor, or take pains to point out how different he was from his predecessor. As time passed, though, more and more writers built on his character to create a

truly romantic version of the Doctor. Not romantic in the sense of snogging his companions (of which there was surprisingly little) or pining for lost loves (although that did, occasionally, happen) but in the literary sense. The Eighth Doctor of the books was a winsome, mysterious, passionate and flawed character who acted on instinct and championed life, even as he was party to death and destruction on a massive scale.

When *Doctor Who* came back to the screen in 2005, BBC Books faced a challenge. It had to wrap up the range in a way that was satisfying to long-term readers, while also avoiding stepping on the toes of the new series, and leaving the way open for a return if the great TV revival had not been a success. Lance Parkin, one of the greatest authors of the range, who had first put the Eighth Doctor in prose for Virgin's *The Dying Days*, got to write him out. *The Gallifrey Chronicles* managed the astonishing feat of tying up eight years of adventures, explaining the Doctor's lost memories, establishing a way to restore Gallifrey in time for its destruction (again) in the Last Great Time War and telling a rollicking adventure. A true celebration of *Doctor Who* in all media and the EDAs in particular, *The Gallifrey Chronicles* stands up as one of the most successful novels in any range.

Looking back after almost thirteen years, it seems the EDAs have become something of an extended footnote in the history of *Doctor Who*. They lack a legacy. The TV series has its own Time War and destruction of Gallifrey which has naturally overwritten the one depicted in the books (and has also now been reversed, in case someone wants to destroy the Time Lords again someday). The Eighth Doctor's last stand has been seen on television and Big Finish has become the dominant narrative leading up to that moment. Even the *DWM* comics have left more of a footprint than the EDAs. Now, increasingly hard to reconcile with the fictitious history of the series, they have been left unbound, a divergent timeline that doesn't quite fit. But for some of us, the Eighth Doctor Adventures were *Doctor Who*, and the wonderful, idealistic Eighth Doctor was our hero, a Doctor who existed foremost in print.

| Dan Tessier



# BOOKMARKS IN TIME

## DOCTOR WHO: ADVENTURES IN TIME AND SPACE

It was the best of times, it was the very best of times. Christmas 1981. After the excitement earlier in the year of the Doctor's first regeneration for what seemed like one heck of a long time, and the surprise return of the Master, recent months had offered up something even better: *The Five Faces of Doctor Who* on BBC2, a season of vintage repeats which had included my first-ever opportunity of seeing the first two Doctors in action, as well as a chance to reacquaint myself with the Third Doctor, Jon Pertwee having bowed out of the programme before I had even reached my fifth birthday.

Now aged 11 (nearly 12!) there was the prospect of a whole new era for the programme, and there had been some tantalising glimpses of this new, radically different Doctor and his companions who would be appearing very soon in Season Nineteen.

It was coming to the end of that very strange nine month period of limbo, when Tom Baker was still sort-of considered to be the current Doctor, even though he wasn't. There was the promise of a K9 Special on TV also, but I was to see only some fuzzy fragments of that on the box, my area falling foul of the transmitter power-failure that dogged the broadcast (pun intended). But yes, Christmas morning, and the joy of opening my presents. Many were expected of course, the items I'd been pleading over for weeks, and there were the usual annuals such as the *2000AD* Annual and, of course, the *Doctor Who* Annual (the one with both the Fourth Doctor and the Fifth Doctor inside).

But what was this? There was another *Doctor Who* book in there, like an annual but about three times as thick. A quick glance at the cover and it looked like a reissue of the 1979 *Doctor Who* Annual, just with the logo updated to that of the current TV series. But no, around that main image of the Fourth Doctor were the faces of the other Doctors... And the book's title was not *The Doctor Who Annual*, but *Doctor Who – Adventures In Time And Space*.

On opening this chunky hardback, it soon became obvious what I had – a compendium of highlights from old *Doctor Who* Annuals, stretching right back to the days of William Hartnell's Doctor!

Now to a youngster like me in 1981, the Hartnell and Troughton eras seemed like pieces of ancient history, as underlined by the fact that the episodes back then had been in black and white. I'm not sure in 1981 that I had even been aware that there had been *Doctor Who* Annuals that long ago, but here was the proof because the stories of the earlier Doctors in this new book definitely had an old-fashioned sort of look about them compared to the more recent Tom Baker ones.

This then was like a book equivalent of *The Five Faces of Doctor Who*, a surreptitious glimpse into a secret past. The major difference though was that while each episode of the repeat season had come and gone in the space of 25 magical minutes, this was a tangible object which I could keep! Vintage *Doctor Who* stories I could keep! The Target novels didn't seem to count in this respect because I knew that most of them were newish publications of old TV adventures, but these stories were more like the genuine article in that they'd been published in the 1960s then had disappeared completely – until now.

Of course, having only seen one TV story apiece from the Hartnell and Troughton eras, and with rather few of their adventures novelised by that point, I did find myself wondering how accurate these old stories were, with their mentions of "Dr Who stepped out of Tardis" and all that. Did the Second Doctor really refer to Jamie and Victoria as 'children'? Did he wear that tall stovepipe hat far more often than the photos in *DWM* would suggest?

No, I wasn't fooled for long. There were numerous pieces of evidence that the old annuals must have been taking liberties, such as the police box frequently looking completely wrong or Jo Grant sporting a short, bobbed hairstyle. And of course I remembered the 1979 *Doctor Who* Annual (the first one I'd acquired) and what little resemblance it bore to its television counterpart.

Nevertheless I found it great fun to immerse myself in these forgotten adventures from yesteryear and see how the series had been interpreted in printed form. The two text stories featuring the First Doctor were well-written and intelligent, with *Peril In Mechanistria* seeming like it was never going to end! It seemed strange that the Doctor was travelling alone, but by the Troughton stories the Doctor's companions were in evidence. It was quite funny to see that the Second Doctor comic strip was obviously referenced from the very same batch of Patrick Troughton photos that *DWM* always seemed to print with regularity.

The Third Doctor stories seemed to capture the flavour of the TV series best, I thought, probably helped by being Earth-based and having the familiar UNIT setting. The Fourth Doctor stories were so bizarre, both in written content and illustration, that I still wonder to this day what the BBC were thinking in approving them, as I find it



very hard to imagine young fans of the series at that time deriving much enjoyment from them.

The book also included a few photo-features from the 1976 *Amazing World of Doctor Who* book, which were a welcome addition, as well as some superfluous features from old *Doctor Who* Annuals about astronomy and such – which could, and most definitely should, have been omitted to leave room for an extra story or two. I mean, they were just the sort of features kids would have skipped the first time around!

A revised version of the book appeared a few years later, renamed *The Doctor Who Special* and updated to include stories of the Fifth and Sixth Doctors, but by then I was older, had managed to get hold of some of the original annuals anyway, and had perhaps become too cynical a reader to get wrapped up in a First or Second Doctor text story in quite the same way.

But yeah, that Christmas, 1981... It was just like *The Five Faces of Doctor Who* all over again. Wonderful.

| David P. May





*If you're looking for a writer with commitment, Nick Mellish is your man. Whotopia's longest-running columnist, the scribe behind 'Target Trawl' has worked his way through a library of Doctor Who Target novels that could host a horde of Vashta Nerada. All the while he still found time to finish a degree and masters in English Literature at the Universities of East Anglia and Sussex respectively, and make an appearance as a contestant on the UK TV game show Countdown.*

*Nick's authorship includes collaborating with Will Brooks on a collection of Big Finish Eighth Doctor story reviews, Memoirs of an Edwardian Adventurer; articles for the fanzine The Terrible Zodin and for Fast Return for the fan group Fourth Dimension Lords; and contributions to a range of works including the book The Casebook of the Manleigh Halt Irregulars from Obverse Books, the Doctor Who anthology The Temporal Logbook and its sequel, and both volumes of Outside In from ATB Publishing.*

*Somehow Nick managed to find the time to talk to us about this writing, which means either he owns a TARDIS or he knows someone does...*

**Whotopia: How and when did you get interested in writing?**

**Nick Mellish:** I genuinely cannot remember a time when I wasn't into writing. Almost as soon as I started reading as a child, I was making up and writing my own stories. I think I saw books, enjoyed stories and thought, "Well, sure, but why do I have to just read other people's work? Can't I do my own as well?"

**W: What is it about writing that appeals to you?**

**NM:** I suppose deep down it's that egotistical part of me that wants to be noticed! Or, more generously, the side of me that has loved and got so much pleasure out of other people's work that he wants to try and replicate that feeling with other people. There's something about a good story that makes people sit up and take notice, and the endless fascination with writing anything, be it fictional or reality, is trying to make it as flawless as you can. You never do, hence the quest to keep going and write more.

**W: How did you get involved in writing for Whotopia and eventually the Target Trawl column?**

**NM:** I was on Gallifrey Base at the time (or

Gallifrey One as it was called back then) and I saw a request for material for a fanzine. I thought I'd give it a whirl and, nearly 8 months later than the deadline, I submitted a short piece looking at the reluctance of New Series fans to dip into the show's past. After that, I pitched *Target Trawl* and here we are!

**W: You've been a Whotopia contributor for over ten years. What's kept you coming back for more?**

**NM:** The honest answer is that the nature of the *Target Trawl* column has meant there was a really good excuse to keep going and reach the end goal. It keeps you submitting columns and reading the books. That said, I wouldn't still be doing it if the editorial side hadn't been so supportive, which is rarer to find that you would hope.

**W: You've written about how The Abominable Snowmen and The Doomsday Weapon were the first Target novelisations your mum bought you. Back in the day before repeats and VHS releases, what was it like discovering and reading those two books?**

**NM:** It was a revelation. I can't recall being aware of the novelisations before then, though I do know I found a copy of *Logopolis* in the



local library soon after. I was one of those post-series fans (-ish. I was born in 1986 so my memories of it as transmitted originally are hazy) so I did have access to some VHS tapes and resources such as the *Doctor Who Yearbook*, which blew me away. It meant that I was aware of stories like *The Abominable Snowmen*, which actually made reading it all the more exciting. It was like stumbling upon buried treasure.

**W: After those first two novels, what made you want to keep collecting them?**

**NM:** I am a hopeless collector, really. My bookshelves are full of whole series, my DVD and Blu Ray collections likewise. I have that collector mentality; the “Gotta Catch ‘Em All!” mindset so favoured by Nintendo and the Pokémon company. Once I started on this slippery slope, I think there was never going to be a safe way back, to be honest.

**W: How and where did you find copies of the older books?**

**NM:** It’s that fascination with how different authors approached them: complete rewrites and reimagining’s? Say-what-you-saw affairs? Tinkering here and there? It’s the English Literature student in me crying out for work! Also, there were a whole load of books I had never quite got round to reading, so it was a good excuse to finally delve into them all and see what the fuss was with books such as *The Myth Makers* and *Remembrance of the Daleks*.

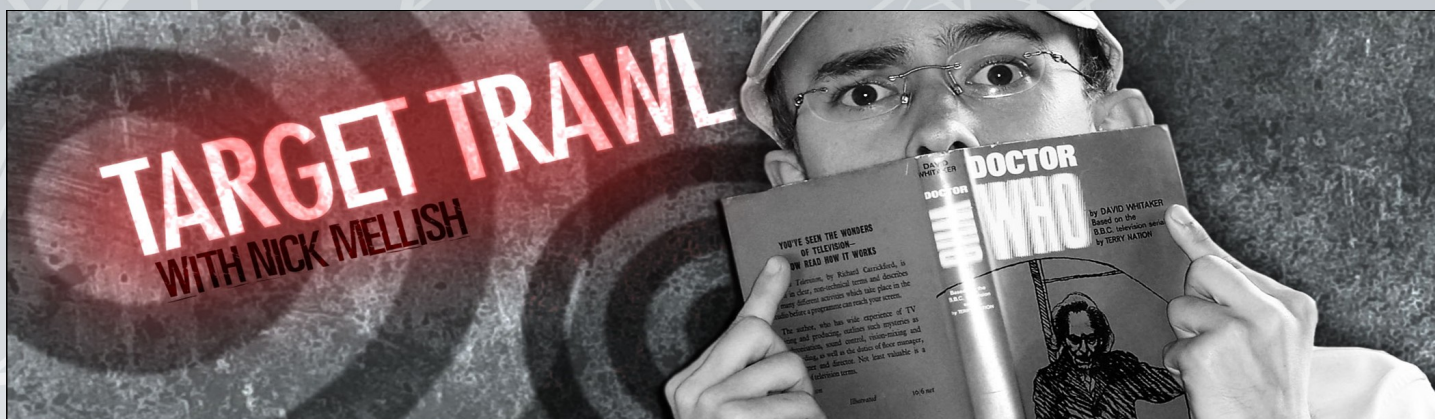
**W: When you wrote your first column for Whotopia, did you think you’d still be writing them ten years later? Now you’re working on Target Trawl, what would you tell your earlier incarnation if you could visit him as he started to write that first column?**

**NM:** I think I imagined I’d see this one through to the end. I can remember when I was reading for my finals at university as an undergraduate that I put study on hold to read the required books for the next issue of *Whotopia*. At that point, I think you know you’re committed.

*The Macra Terror* to DWAS just shows how deep into fan territory they were by then. The early ones are intriguing though, or rather the perception that they stuck to what we saw. That’s true for the most part, but we hit the ground running with a complete reworking of the show’s origins and characters in *An Exciting Adventure with the Daleks*, get a new introduction for Jo Grant a few books later, and all the while tinker and change bits here and there. They couldn’t help themselves! For all that later novelizations like *The Romans* push the format further still and stretch beyond original scripts, I think the past showed just how far they could go and they just returned in some ways to their roots.

**W: What’s your favourite Target novelisation and why do you love it?**

**NM:** That’s a tricky question to answer and one I’m still mulling over! The final answer will be in the book, though I suspect it may be a group of high hitters instead of a ranked list.



**NM:** It’s been a case of searching all over the place. Back in the past, it was by going to second-hand bookshops and car boot sales and suchlike. Later on, it was via online sellers and other fans.

**W: What was the hardest novelisation to find and how did you find it (bonus points if it’s not *The Wheel in Space*)?**

**NM:** It’s definitely not *The Wheel in Space*: I was extremely lucky and found it for the equivalent of just under a dollar in a bookshop in Norwich, England! I think the hardest to get hold of were the *Companions of Doctor Who* series. I tried for years to find them in bookshops, but in the end grabbed them off Amazon Marketplace. The last novelisation from the original run I purchased was *The Underwater Menace* and the final Target book outside of that was *Harry Sullivan’s War*.

**W: What was it about Target novels that inspired you to pen *Target Trawl*?**

**W: Over the years, the Target novelisations evolved. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, they were really the only way someone could relive a story. They rarely strayed far from the script. By the late 1980s – with the advent of the video releases and the growth of fandom – the books began to get deeper and move further from a pure representation of the show (hello, *Remembrance of the Daleks*). How have you responded to the various eras of Target novelisations, and how do you feel about them now?**

**NM:** I certainly felt that burnout in the middle of the range that every reader does, where they lose their flair and become little more than annotated transcripts at times. The later novelisations are interesting. They’re very reflective of a show and range now aiming at fans instead of a wider market, which comes with its pros and cons. By the time you reach *Galaxy Four*, they’re not even bothering to explain which Doctor is in the main role, assuming you just know instead, and dedicating

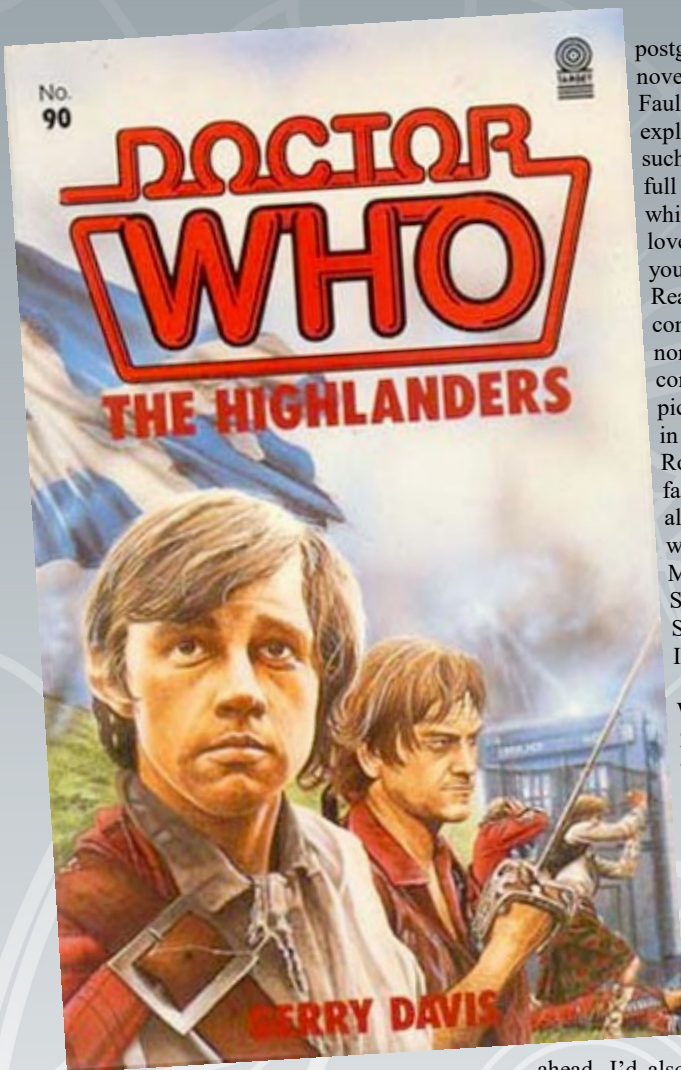
**W: What do you look for in a great Target novelisation?**

**NM:** They need to have a certain spark and life about the writing, be that in a retelling that changes a lot, humour that’s been added in, or even just a simple script-to-page affair that’s written with flair. Compare *The Horror of Fang Rock* to *The Monster of Peladon*, for example. They’re both essentially just he said / she said adaptations, but the former is far richer.

**W: Do you have any of the weird spin-offs Target did, such as *The Doctor Who Quiz Book* and *The Doctor Who Crossword Book*. Will you include them in your adventures somehow?**

**NM:** I own them but I’ve steered clear for this book (unless you’d like me to do otherwise?!). My reasoning was that I should stick to the fictional aspect of Target instead of muddying the waters with all the rest, interesting and important works though they are.





**W:** Besides the Target novels, what other types of *Doctor Who*-related books have you read?

**NM:** Oh lummy, where to start?! I've read all of the *Eighth Doctor Adventures*, which could be a mixed bag at times but extremely satisfying when it hit big. I've kept up to date with the New Series novels, too, though some of the anthologies I'm behind on. *The Sarah Jane Adventures* novelisations I've read all of, but I've never touched the original *Torchwood* books. I have read the three *Class* ones though, which were pretty good and show how much potential that series had deep down. *The Missing Adventures* range I've read around 50% of, and I'm working through the Telos Novellas, *New Adventures* and *Past Doctor Adventures* for various other projects.

**W:** Beyond *Doctor Who*, what sort of fiction do you like to read? Do you have a favourite *Doctor Who* writer and non-*Doctor Who* writer?

**NM:** I'm an eclectic reader, which I think is reflective of studying English at a degree and

postgraduate level. I will defend a novel like *Birdsong* by Sebastian Faulkes with the same ferocity as I explain why *The Gruffalo's Child* is such a good book. My shelves are full of a lot of children's literature, which is the area of writing I would love to make a living in one day, but you'll also find in there Jack Reacher, graphic novels, romantic comedies (or 'chick-lit' if you will), non-fictional studies, manga, comedies, sci-fi, biographies, picture books... there's a whole lot in there. Douglas Adams and J K Rowling are (predictably) favourite authors of mine, but I also really like a lot of the work of writers like Holly Smale, Ian McEwan, Jenny Colgan, Robin Stevens, Clara Vulliamy, William Shakespeare, Julia Donaldson, Ian Fleming and far more.

**W:** Now you're working on *Target Trawl*, what would you tell your earlier incarnation if you could visit him as he started to write that first column?

**NM:** I'd let him see that I'm alive and well and writing, and hope that gets him through some of the darker days

ahead. I'd also whisper in his ear that we'll be up to Doctor Thirteen by the time he finishes, and see how he reacts.

**W:** How did the idea of writing the *Target Trawl* column evolve into writing the *Target Trawl* book?

**NM:** From memory, it was suggested a couple of years ago but I had to decline at the time. I was changing jobs, and not too long after houses and location, and things were just the wrong side of slightly busy. It was in 2016 when I was asked again if I'd consider it, and I decided it would be a nice project to work on across the next year. In the end, I read almost exclusively *Doctor Who* books that year, which was a bit much at times but it got the job done.

**W:** What sort of challenges have you had in writing the book?

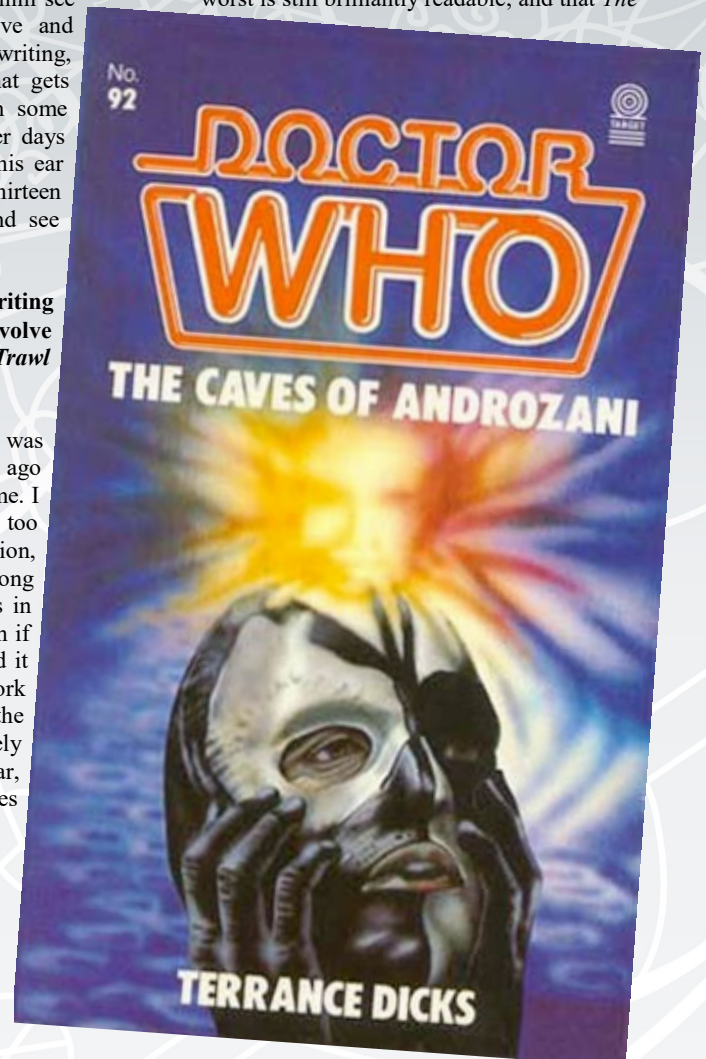
**NM:** One of the main issues has been formatting it so it reads more like a book and less like bite size chunks in a magazine column. I've tried to stick close to the original articles, but I've expanded or better clarified points here and there to make for what I hope is a more satisfying read.

**W:** How would you say the forthcoming *Target Trawl* book differs from say *The Target Book* by David J. Howe?

**NM:** Mine is purely a review book instead of delving into the history of the range: they're very different beasts. Howe's book is rightly held up to be the best of the best, and if anyone hasn't gone out there and purchased the thing, I highly recommend you do. It's a fascinating and deep read worth every penny spent and every second read.

**W:** What is the one thing you've most learned from reading the entire range of *Target* books?

**NM:** That fan wisdom isn't always right; that Terrance Dicks at his best is every bit the master of his craft that people claim, and at his worst is still brilliantly readable; and that *The*







*Pirate Planet* is a fantastic book, no matter what we got on screen.

**W:** How is writing on the *Target Trawl* book progressing? What stage of the book's production are you at?

**NM:** The books are all read and the reviews all written. Right now, I'm going through them all one by one, reformatting and tweaking the text and doing a lot of editing. I never knew I'd have almost 4 pages of things to say about *Time and the Rani* but barely two paragraphs on *The Time Meddler*, yet here we are! After my edits, it's the turn of other editors to step in and then I suspect there will be a lot more to tweak and

nip and tuck.

**W:** When can we expect to see the published version?

**NM:** These things are always subject to change, but I would hope Summer 2018, be that early or late in the season. It all depends on how quickly all the proofreading and editing takes. Right now, I'm working 9 to 5 in an office, then doing at least a couple of hours of editing a night, so it's going as quickly as possible.

**W:** Once you've completed work on *Target Trawl*, what plans do you have?

**NM:** The plan to start with is just to rest, and then we shall see! I've some fiction I'm working on and a couple of pitches to agents I'm tinkering with, so hopefully some of that will yield fruit.

**W:** How do you feel about Target's comeback in 2018 (with Russell T Davies' novelisation of *Rose et al.*)?

**NM:** Extremely excited! What brilliant writers they've got for the range, too. It's meant putting the publication of the book back so I can cover those as well, but that's a small price to pay for what should be an interesting few books.



**W:** Ok, I have to ask: how do you order your Target novels on your bookshelves? Do you have them in the 'Doctor Who Library' number order? Do you go for a strict publication order? Or a hybrid method? Where do you file *Harry Sullivan's War*?

**NM:** The sad and honest answer is that I've no space for them to all be displayed, so they're stacked in a large plastic tub! Criminal, isn't it? I should be kicked out of fandom.

*Our sincere thanks to Nick Mellish for kindly answering all of our questions. We wish Nick all the very best as his Target Trawl column transitions into book form very soon. Interview Questions by Richard Peevers, Bob Furnell & Jez Strickley*



# Andersonic

AN APPRECIATION OF CLASSIC TV FANTASY

Andersonic is an A5 fanzine which explores and discusses the TV series and films of Gerry Anderson - from Supercar up to New Captain Scarlet. Issue 12 will be available shortly, featuring interviews with sculptor John Blundall and Focus Puller Robin McDonald, as well as features on Royal Mail's Supermarionation Stamps and an unfilmed Space: 1999 script. Previous issues have included interviews with Shaun Whittacker-Cook, Leo Eaton and Mike Trim, as well as articles on the influence of the X-Planes on Century 21 and the fate of Century 21 miniatures that ended up in Doctor Who. Further details on contents, back issues and how to contribute can be found on our website...

[www.andersonic.co.uk](http://www.andersonic.co.uk)



# TARGET NOVELIZATIONS AND ME

**\*\*WARNING! What follows are the opinions of a random nerd. Proceed with caution.\*\***

In the days before DVDs, and torrent sites, there wasn't much of a way to re-watch your favorite episodes of *Doctor Who*, unless you were lucky and it repeated. However, if you didn't mind reading, you were in luck! There were novelizations, *Target* novelizations of your favourite episodes from Hartnell to McCoy. Luckily enough, at a recent convention, someone was selling off a large portion of Target novels and I got my hands on four: *The Enemy of the World*, *The Deadly Assassin*, *The Five Doctors*, and *The Happiness Patrol*. There were so many to choose from, but money was slowly dwindling from all the stuff I was buying, and I didn't want to deplete her of her collection.

Believe me, when I spotted those babies, I was so excited. I mean, they're so expensive to get but they were so cheap here! I loved these episodes, and was intrigued to see how they were put into writing... especially the Kandyman, I love to hate the Kandyman.

You may think I'm about to sit down and tell you what was the same and what was different about the novel and the episode, but no, I'm here to discuss Target novelizations for the modern fan, because we don't get many

novelizations today, and it's a rare treat to come across these, dare I say, relics?

The first thing I must say about finding them is that you won't truly experience these novels unless you find original copies because they would be aged, and my goodness, the smell of an old book is the best smell in the Universe,

Target novelizations from today's *Doctor Who* novels: size, and cover art.

The one thing that many readers may find daunting, especially in the modern era of everything being shortened, is the size of the book. The novels today are pretty thick in comparison. Take the Douglas Adams novelizations as a bit of an example. They are decently sized books, and to some, it may look to be quite the undertaking. While I was perusing through all those Target novelizations I noticed them all to be relatively the same exact thickness, with the most pages being 140. 140 pages? That's nothing! Whereas today, *Doctor Who* stories may go up to 300-plus pages! Modern Whovians, Whofans, Who-Heads, etc., it's a great jumping-off point into the realm of Classic *Who* if you can't get access to the actual filmed serials. It's also a great start if the modern book size is daunting to new readers. However, yes, the price will most definitely be an issue, but there are always people who sell them for different prices. Libraries are a good start too! Have a friend who has them? Ask! You won't be disappointed.

Now this next bit is something I wish was still a big part of the novels today, and that is cover

art. The Target novelizations had original art gracing the cover, unlike many of the novels today that just have manipulated photographs of the Doctors and companions. There's something truly unique and beautiful about



## TARGET

and I'll be damned if that isn't a good starting point for these novelizations. Then again, I'm a book nerd, so it's a magical point for me. With that said, there are two things separating the



these original pieces of art created for these novelizations. Don't get me wrong, some of the digital paintings and art for today's books are done very well, and can be quite gorgeous, but not all of these novels have them. These art creations are rarely used on today's adaptations, and it's a shame. But all the Target novelizations, if not a large portion of them, utilize original, gorgeous artwork.

With ALL of that said, it has come to my attention that BBC Books has been putting out some novelizations of classic episodes. I had purchased a copy of the novelization of *Genesis of the Daleks*. I thought nothing of it until I realized, all the classic novelizations were done under the 'Target Book' name. Now, BBC Books appears to be reprinting these novelizations under their own name. To me this signals something very significant. Here I was trying to sound convincing about the lure of Target novelizations when BBC Books is bringing them back! I mean, you'll still get the smaller book size, but you won't get that awesome old book smell... just saying. Since BBC Books are reprinting these novelizations, this makes me believe that there has been some interest in those old novelizations, and in order to make them more readily available, they've been experimenting with these reprints. Around 2011, BBC Books reprinted a few of those classics with new cover art. The cover art on the new classic novelizations were certainly simpler in design, placed on an off-white background, sort of giving an anniversary feel to it.

What do I mean by that?

When the fiftieth anniversary of the show came around, some novels were re-printed and the covers were placed on a plain white background, so it's somewhat similar, at least in my eyes. Seeing the new covers makes me think the new reprints are done in homage to the original. The simple covers were to show that they could never top the original, but they were bringing them back for a more modern audience.

All in all, while I love the idea of collecting the original novelizations under the Target name, I think it's wonderful they're being brought back under the BBC Books name, letting modern audiences revel in the wonders of the Classic series. Nothing can beat the smell of old books and nothing can replace that cover artwork, which makes the Target novelizations something truly special, but, all-in-all, the small book size will make sure any fan can have the chance to read some Classic *Doctor Who*.

| Jessica Chaleff

# THE TEMPORAL LOGBOOK REVIEWED

*Doctor Who* fanfic collections – “fanthologies” – have been around for donkey's years, but there's been a lull since the series returned to TV. It seems that we're now getting something of a resurgence in the form, following the War Doctor collection *Seasons of War*, and with several collections lined up. The latest, *Temporal Logbook*, comes from Pencil Tip Publishing, and is edited by Bob Funnell, Jez Strickley and Robert Mammone, all of whom have been part of the very long-running and acclaimed fanfic series *The Doctor Who Project*. It is also one of the best such collections I've read, featuring an exceptionally high standard of work.

*Temporal Logbook* takes a very simple, but undeniably effective, approach: twelve stories, one for each official incarnation of the Doctor, collected in chronological order. If there's a theme for the collection, it's the effect that the Doctor has on people's lives, but beyond that, this is a broad and varied selection of stories mixing numerous styles.

The stand-out stories for me are the fourth adventure, “The Eternalist,” by Craig Charlesworth, and the eleventh, Michael Itig's “Somewhere Between Heaven and Hell.” The former has a fascinating central concept, that of a boy who can perceive all moment in time at once, developed into a gripping but contained story with a strong element of horror, and a pitch perfect representation of the fourth Doctor. It also has perhaps the best description of the nature of time I've ever encountered. In “Heaven and Hell,” the Doctor becomes involved in the life of Pete, an older gay man, whose life is being swallowed by regret. A powerful treatise on depression and hope, it's an exploration of gay life in the UK that comes across as deeply personal. Really quite beautiful.

Relationships and personal demons feature strongly in the collection, with the more modern, emotionally aware approach given to older Doctors. The opening story, Michael Baxter's “A Modest Intervention,” is an unusual tale for the first Doctor, in which the time traveller takes a puckish glee in matchmaking. Not the sort of thing we normally expect the first Doctor to be concerned with, but he does engage it with very good reason.

The fifth Doctor encounters an intriguing and controversial figure in the person of Charles Dodgson. With “Impossible Things Before Breakfast” Hannah Parry has a wonderful way with Carrollian whimsy, tying it to a strong character piece, and making unexpected parallels between the author and the Time Lord.

Several of the stories are steeped in continuity, which is fine and dandy; this is a collection for fans, after all. It's not continuity for the sake of a nod and a wink, though; it's all in the service of a good story. J. E. Remy's second Doctor story, “Breathe,” has a very Moffat-ish title, but is actually a full-on dive into the series' mythology. Featuring Time Lords a-plenty, it investigates what happened to Salamander after he was swept away into the Time Vortex. “The Telemacad” is another story that follows up on a television serial. A third Doctor story by Benjamin Pocock, it's set in ancient Greece and written in a pseudo-classical style, something which is hard to pull off without becoming trite or dull. Pocock succeeds in crafting an enjoyable tale, with portrayals of Three and Jo that are completely recognisable, even translated through archaic style. Hamish Crawford's “Mud and Metal” is the missing adventure of the ninth Doctor versus the Cybermen, a fun tale with a touch of horror.

Other tales take what could be well-worn ideas and give them something new. “The Brain Drain” by Ian Larkin has the Sixey and Peri encounter a mind-sapping cyborg, but makes her the central character, and a sympathetic one at that. Sarah Parry's “A Plague on Both Your Houses” has an excellent visual – the creepy, beaked plague doctors of the time of the Black Death – and uses it to create a gripping tale for the seventh Doctor and Ace. Some stories pair the Doctor with new companions, such as Nick Mellish's enjoyable “Changed and Confused.” A story featuring the

eighth Doctor and taking place on the edge of the Time War, it's fairly slight, but has



strong characterisation for the Doctor and his short-term assistant, Delaylia, a young Time Lady who is coming to terms with her first regeneration. Also, it has Voord in it. I like the Voord. Also featuring a new companion is the tenth Doctor story, “The Creature of Vengeance,” (a proper *Doctor Who* title there). This takes Ten and his unwitting travelling companion Sophie on a trip to Prague, for an adventure with Nazis and a memorable monster.

The collection ends with a story from the always excellent Meg MacDonald. “Many a Weary Foot” has a subtle nod to series continuity, featuring a lonely, withdrawn twelfth Doctor between the episodes Kill the Moon and Mummy on the Orient Express, who finds solace in an unlikely place. It's a straightforward character piece, no monsters, no threats to history, and beautifully told, with an extra little something for fans of the modern era of *Doctor Who*. It rounds off the collection perfectly, showing us the effect that an ordinary human being can have on the Doctor. An excellent conclusion to a collection I can heartily recommend.

| Dan Tessier

You can purchase a copy of the *Temporal Logbook* by visiting the Pencil Tip Publishing page at [www.lulu.com/spotlight/penciltippublishing](http://www.lulu.com/spotlight/penciltippublishing)



# THE RICK CROSS INTERVIEW

It seems that despite *Doctor Who* being created in effect by a Canadian, writers in North America have had few in-ways towards writing for the series. One of the places where they have found such opportunity have come in the myriad of spin-off media based around the show. Writers such as Jonathan Blum and Lloyd Rose have found such paths via the various licensed novel and audio drama routes. One of the latest writers to find a way to write for licensed media is Huntsville, Alabama-based writer Rick Cross who contributed *Time Squared* to Candy Jar Books *Lethbridge-Stewart*. The novel, set in late 1960s New York City, finds the future UNIT commander facing off once more against the Great Intelligence and the robotic Yeti. I was lucky enough recently to have the chance to chat with him about the novel and his being a fan of the series.

**Matthew Kresal: Let's start with an obvious question: What's your earliest memory of *Doctor Who*?**

**Rick Cross:** Ah – okay, a bit of backstory to explain: I was an Army brat, and spent the first 18 years of my life (I'm now 51) bopping from one U.S. Army post to the next in the wake of my career military father. We had lived in 13 different homes in 11 different states by the time I graduated from high school. It was *not* a lifestyle conducive to mental health and well-being if you're a heavy, introverted kid with a big imagination but not a lot of confidence! The one constant, though, wherever we went, was television. *Star Trek* reruns. *Happy Days*. *The Wonderful World of Disney*. *The Incredible Hulk*. *The Hardy Boys* and *Nancy Drew Mysteries*. *Fantasy Island*. I watched everything, often indiscriminately, that my fairly strict parents would tolerate; I was a total stereotype of the 1970s-era American kid, drinking popular culture straight from the firehose. And while my youthful fascination with TV wasn't terribly critical, I did very early on start to discover the patterns and predictability of TV drama written around the inevitable advertising breaks in American television. I became very keen at predicting plot and story beats in dramatic programming,

comedies, everything; you start to see the fingerprints of the industry creative types after awhile.

Then in 1980, we moved from Maryland to Colorado, where my father took on command of Rocky Mountain Arsenal outside Denver. We lived in this little bedroom community called Aurora (not too far from the infamous city of Columbine) and we got our first television cable box. Up til then, we'd lived with the traditional three TV channels, plus the occasional snowy Public Broadcasting Station, which I hadn't spent much time watching since I outgrew *Sesame Street*. But in Aurora, that cable box delivered more than 60 channels of programming – most of it crap, of course! – but among them was the first truly clear PBS station I can ever remember. And every day after school, around 4:30 in the afternoon, they aired *Doctor Who*. I'd never heard of this program; at that point, I'd still not discovered *Starlog* magazine – my science-fiction fandom was limited to the movies and TV shows I watched, the novels I read and my own imaginative spins on those. So this strange program with the mesmerizing, streaming tunnel and the unforgettable opening theme music captivated me. It was like nothing I'd ever seen before. It didn't break for commercials! It didn't have a predictable American storytelling rhythm! Heck, its leading man almost never picked up a gun!

I was hooked, instantly and thoroughly. It was Tom Baker I saw first, of course, like so many other American fans who first stumbled across *Doctor Who* thanks to PBS. Looking back, I'm pretty sure the very first episode I saw was a later part of *Revenge of the Cybermen* (1975) or *The Pyramids of Mars* (1975), so I didn't even come in at a good starting point, but that didn't matter. I was utterly engrossed. (It also didn't matter to me at the time that our PBS station

didn't even run the stories in order! They'd air every half-hour installment in a single tale over the course of four weekdays, or six, but they'd jump around among the episodes available! I remember watching Tom and Elisabeth Sladen, then immediately jumping to a Leela story, then another with Sladen's Sarah Jane Smith and Ian Marter as Harry Sullivan! There was no rhyme or reason to their delivery order. Through luck or design, I also discovered the Target novelisations at the same time; there was a series of six or so reprints here in the States, but this little hole-in-the-wall comics shop at a local mall also carried the British originals, so I would pick them up randomly. There was no sensible publication order there either, so I thought at the time that was just how *Doctor Who* worked. But I was utterly captivated.





# [Andy] had me “audition” by delivering a short horror story in a fairly quick timeframe. I did so, Andy liked what I wrote...

Tom’s Doctor was the strangest but most charismatic and believable hero I’d ever encountered. He didn’t even carry a gun! He just relied on his wits, some occasionally scathing witticisms and an uncanny ability to run away very fast... all traits that a chubby, shy teenager who was constantly sweating over bullies at each new school system could get behind!

I was addicted to *Doctor Who* for the next 5-6 years, even attending Starcon Denver in 1982 so I could meet John Nathan-Turner, the famously embattled producer back in that era. I struggled with the transformation of Tom Baker into Peter Davison – my first regeneration – but the spellbinding storytelling kept me coming back. I watched Tom and Peter’s adventures for several years, but then lost track of *Doctor Who* when I went away to college. I confess, I didn’t rediscover the series until my son, home sick from school one day, said, “Hey, Dad, what’s this British show *Doctor Who*?” It was 2009, and he’d found a David Tennant two-parter called *Silence in the Library / Forest of the Dead* (2008). We sat and watched the whole thing – and just like back in my own childhood, Declan was instantly hooked. I was again too! We’ve been Whovian diehards ever since!

Donbavand and Paul Magrs for going out of their way to offer some praise for my attempts at various tales, including one someone challenged me to consider, about how the Doctor might meet the end of his long, long life...).

Andy emailed me out of the blue, asking if I would be interested in writing for Candy Jar. I was dumbfounded, of course, by the unexpected offer. I knew the Brigadier –

Candy Jar when they debuted – Declan and I are both voracious *Doctor Who* readers as well as TV fans – so I already knew the series’ premise and style. I humbly told Andy I was very interested, so he had me “audition” by delivering a short horror story in a fairly quick timeframe. I did so, Andy liked what I wrote, and the deal was done! I couldn’t believe my good fortune. Not only would I finally have a chance to write and publish a novel... but it was part of the *Doctor Who* universe, no less.

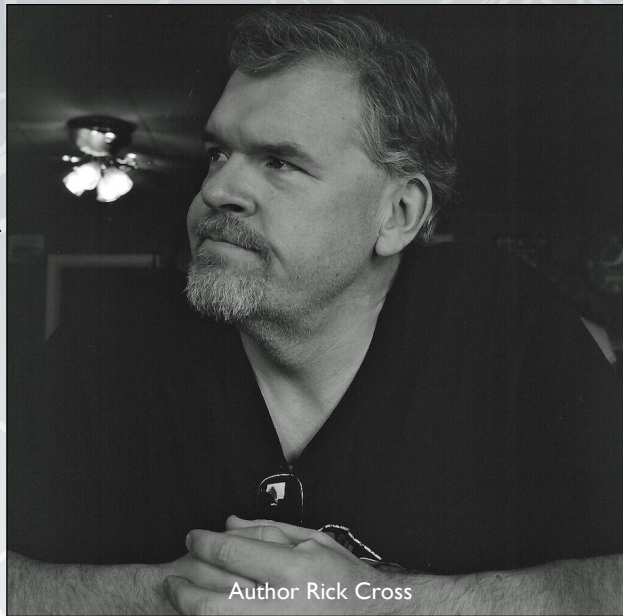
Definitely a case of the cosmos smiling down on this fan, for sure!

**MK:** Does the novel’s American setting come from you being an American yourself or was the setting pre-determined before you came to write the novel?

**RC:** Andy and Candy Jar’s publisher, Shaun Russell, knew they wanted to set one of the stories in New York City, adding to the Lethbridge-Stewart series’ international, globe-hopping flavor. And to give the story some added appeal for longtime British fans, they wanted to employ an American “voice”, someone who might better be able to capture the tone and flavor of life on this side of the pond (not that any of the amazing British writers in this series couldn’t have knocked it out of the park, frankly!). So choosing an American author for this particular outing was always part of his plan, thankfully.

Shaun and Andy are also devoted to looking for new talent, new voices – so, thankfully, when it came time to look for an American writer, Andy turned to Facebook, happened upon my blatherings, and the rest, as the Doctor might say, was history!

That said, the story is set in the late 1960s. I was born in 1967; I would have been about two at the time the novel is set! So it’s not like I have a lot of *personal* memories of that turbulent time, let alone life in the fabulously busy melting pot of New York. So I did a lot of research, which was actually bliss; some of the elements of the novel, even just the little touches, are wholly real. For instance,



Author Rick Cross

**MK:** How did you fall into the orbit of Candy Jar Books and the *Lethbridge-Stewart* range?

**RC:** That was more by luck than design! I’ve been an aspiring writer for years, but put my novel-writing dreams aside to pursue a career in communications and public relations – most recently serving NASA’s Marshall Space Flight Center for the past 19 years. But I never stopped writing, and have always shared my fiction via whatever medium was available. Most recently, that’s been Facebook, where my short stories happened across the radar of Andy Frankham-Allen, editor of the *Lethbridge-Stewart* range at Candy Jar (with deep thanks to established British writers including Tommy

Alistair Gordon Lethbridge-Stewart, the series’ main character – from the Target novelisations, though as a teen I’d only seen the few scattered episodes he did with Tom Baker (*Robot* (1974/5), *Terror of the Zygons* (1975)), but in the years since Declan and I got hooked on the new series, I’d also managed to acquire a complete set of the classic episodes on DVD, so by now I was fully versed in the Third Doctor’s era, the UNIT family period headed up by “the Brig”, who quickly became one of my favorite recurring characters, largely due to the brilliantly bemused (and sometimes pained) performance of the late Nicholas Courtney. What a gem he was! I’d also snapped up the first four *Lethbridge-Stewart* novels from

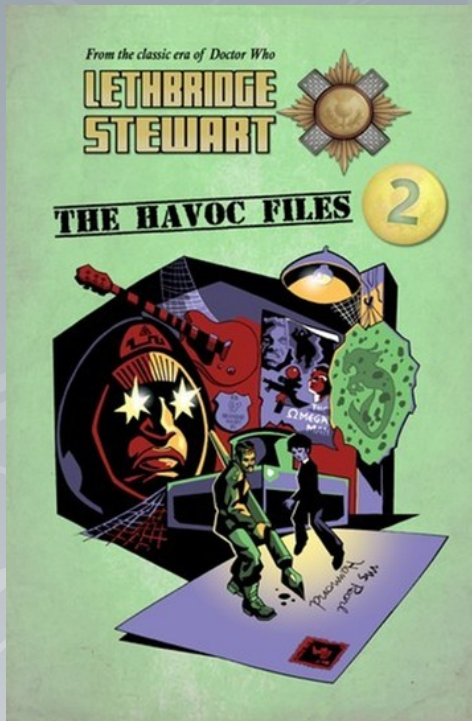


Lethbridge-Stewart's fiancée Sally is reading an issue of *Look* magazine during their inbound flight at the start of the novel. That exact issue, with its cover story "The Wedding Racket", was 100 percent real. It's a tiny, throwaway element that almost no one would ever remark on, but I just couldn't believe how perfectly it fit with the unfolding story of the Brigadier's discomfort over his upcoming nuptials! I also researched the city itself exhaustively, adding little details about the popular night clubs and hot music of the day. I had to restrain myself from begging Andy to try to include some photographs of the bustling city from that era, so inspired was I by the rich and fascinating life and livelihood of New York they illustrated! And of course there's the whole backdrop of Vietnam, the youth counterculture and ongoing racial and gender-equality issues America was grappling with at the time (still all too relevant and unresolved today, alas); all that got folded into the strata I built upon. It truly was one of the most delightful projects I've ever undertaken!

**MK: Were there any major changes between the outline and the final novel ie plot lines lost or characters?**

I overshot my word count by 15,000 words, so yeah, we had to do quite a bit of cutting! That said, I'm pretty thrilled with the final version; most of what had to come out was atmosphere, broader strokes and longer character interactions, a lot more information about the coma patients in the hospital and more of Travers' misadventures. Honestly, I think most of the cuts were merited, because they really streamlined the book. Once the Brig's plane lands in New York, the story takes off like a bullet and hardly slows down again; I love that! So my hat's definitely off to Andy Frankham-Allen for some really smart, insightful edits.

The only cut that hurt, honestly, was an extended detour into the backstory of Jemba-Wa, the enigmatic character at the heart of the villain's evil machinations. He's intended to serve as a traditional *Doctor Who* secondary baddie, very much in the vein of Tobias Vaughn in the Cyberman story *The Invasion* (1968) or Scarman in *Pyramids of Mars*. At the same time, I wanted to humanize him, to demonstrate how very badly he'd been used by the Great Intelligence over the long years. So there was a whole chapter about Jemba-Wa



Rick's story "House of Giants" appeared in the Havoc Files 2

growing up as a boy in a tiny village in Tibet, tending his father's flock, chafing for a life with meaning... and along comes the Intelligence, with its whispered promises of wealth and power, travel and freedom. The loss of that segment doesn't hurt the novel, I think, but I would like to polish it up someday and see it published, perhaps in one of the *Lethbridge-Stewart* anthologies. I've always ascribed to the belief that the best villains don't *know* they're villains; they honestly believe in what they're doing, and think it's the right path to follow. The good ones are more than just leering, mustache-stroking baddies who want to overthrow the world just to see it burn... That's definitely Jemba-Wa, in the end.

**Let's talk about the Great Intelligence, who once again returns as the novel's big bad as it were. Was using a returning villain a challenge in trying to find something new to do with it?**

That was part of the remit from Candy Jar. In acquiring the rights to the Brig and other creations by classic *Doctor Who* writers Mervyn Haisman and Henry Lincoln, Candy

Jar had anchored its spin-off series not just around the Brigadier but around that initial arch-nemesis of the Doctor from *The Web of Fear* (1968). They didn't want *every* novel in the series to involve the Great Intelligence, obviously, but in a way, that evil entity has become the Master to the Brigadier's Doctor in this particular series. The Intelligence is determined to bring down this human who has dared to stand against it, even without the Doctor there to save the day, and over the years it keeps coming up with new schemes to do so.

It had been a while since the Intelligence and its Yeti henchmen had turned up, so Andy wanted to use *Times Squared* to reintroduce them. With the subway beneath New York, it was the perfect opportunity to pay homage to *The Web of Fear*, set in the London Underground, and also to carry on the struggle set up both in classic *Doctor Who* and in the *Lethbridge-Stewart* debut novel *The Forgotten Son*. The real challenge for me was wrapping my head around the twists and turns in time! The Intelligence's story is in no way linear, especially since the brilliant Steven Moffat episode *The Snowmen* (2012), which tied the Eleventh Doctor into the mix, and then *The Name of the Doctor* (2013), in which the Intelligence hatches a masterful plot to enter the Doctor's timeline at every point and ruin every one of his lives! So how to riff in an original way on a character who'd already pulled *that* off (or would have, if Clara hadn't saved the day) was definitely a challenge. We decided to write a somewhat more intimate story, with the Intelligence still bitterly determined to kill Lethbridge-Stewart for his meddling, but also find a way to riff on its plans in *The Web of Fear*, this time attempting to harness millions of human minds (instead of just the Doctor's singularly powerful one) in New York to assert control on Earth.

My favorite contribution to the plot was the idea of stripping the Yeti down to their robot endoskeletons. We'd seen the big furry lummoxes time and again, and they're always slightly too cute, too fluffy, to be as thoroughly frightening as they *should* be. I wanted to focus on their speed, size and relentlessness; I'd envisioned the subway ambush scene, with the rats "wearing" the Yetis' fur to distract the SWAT team, and from there decided to peel down even more of them in order to boost their alien-ness and ratchet up the terror factor. And it didn't hurt that I got an early look at Martin Baines' gorgeous cover art; he delivered such a mad, wicked, chilling design for the "naked" Yeti, like something out of the Japanese cult horror film *Tetsuo: The Iron Man* (1989). I loved it! His design inspired me like mad. From that point on, I just wanted to make the Yeti absolutely terrifying.

**...of course there's the whole backdrop of Vietnam, the youth counterculture and ongoing racial and gender-equality issues America was grappling with...**



**MK:** Long time *Who* novel readers may notice the presence of Adrienne Kramer, future leader of UNIT's US contingent (created by Jonathan Blum for his fan film *Time Rift* and later featuring in the 1997 *EDA Vampire Science* that he co-wrote with his wife Kate Orman). How did she come into the novel?

**RC:** Andy had been corresponding with Jonathan, and was keen to try to tie in volumes in the *Lethbridge-Stewart* series with some of the most beloved contributions to the classic line of *Doctor Who* novels. *Vampire Science* is a favorite of his, and upon reading a copy to help prepare to write *Times Squared*, I could absolutely see why; it's a corker! Blum and Orman routinely get listed among the best-ever *Who* novelists, and it was easy to see why. Great Eighth Doctor storytelling, powerful villains, an energetic plot – and the awe-inspiring Adrienne Kramer. Andy was excited when Jonathan gave us the nod to write a sort of origin story for her, to show an early incident that helped lead her to her eventual command position. I loved doing that. And it didn't hurt that here, in the timeframe of *Times Squared*, Kramer is a young, whip-smart, sexy black woman with military background; I totally had 1970s blaxploitation heroine Pam Grier in my mind's eye the whole time I was writing her. I hope Jonathan Blum and Kate Orman enjoyed Kramer in *Times Squared* as much as I loved her in *Vampire Science*!

**MK:** I also want to ask about your two short stories that appeared in Candy Jar's *The Havoc Files* series: *The Creatures in the Cave* and *House of Giants*. Can you tell us a bit about working on those?

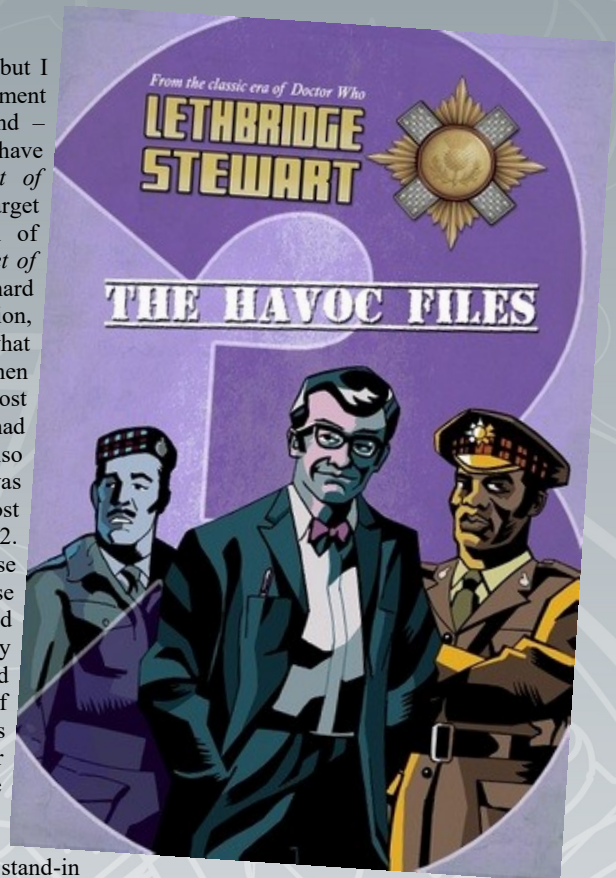
**RC:** I love the anthologies! Some of the most enjoyable reading around is short *Doctor Who*-related stories, I've discovered, and the *Havoc Files* anthologies are no exception. Andy wanted to include "The Creatures in the Cave", which was an early, somewhat expanded version of the *Times Squared* prologue, to whet readers' appetites for that upcoming novel. It also kind of committed me, like "Well, the prologue's out there in the world, you'd better get the whole novel written now!" It was great motivation in that regard!

"House of Giants", on the other hand, was an actual story assignment from Candy Jar, a What-If? idea Andy had for tying together our main characters, particularly Alistair Lethbridge-Stewart and his comrade Anne Travers, with the classic First Doctor TV story *Planet of Giants* (1964). I love the notion that the Brigadier is stomping around the scene of this adventure after the Doctor and his companions have departed. We know the Brigadier well enough to know he's not the wistful type, not

one to ruminate over old friendships, but I still liked the subtle sliver of disappointment that he'd missed seeing his old friend – though of course he wouldn't have recognized him! I rewatched *Planet of Giants* to prepare and read the Target novelisation. But to me, the notion of shrinking first calls to mind not *Planet of Giants* but *The Shrinking Man* by Richard Matheson and the 1957 film adaptation, *The Incredible Shrinking Man*. So what instantly dropped into my head when kicking around ideas was that tale's most chilling adversary: the spider. *Planet* had already done a giant cat, which also figured in Matheson's work, but it was the spider that freaked me out the most when I first read the novel around age 12. I did some research on common house spiders, and happened upon these ghoulish crab spiders typical to old country homes in rural England. Ghastly things! I envisioned the Brigadier and Anne squaring off against a couple of these venom-drooling monstrosities using nothing but a darning needle... or a toothpick. Knowing neither was the type to chew on a toothpick, I started imagining who might – and Geddy Caslow was born. Geddy became my stand-in for Scott Carey, Matheson's hero; I even borrowed a couple closing lines from the original novel to round out Geddy's tale, in honor of Matheson's inspiration. Honestly, I wish *House of Giants* had had another couple thousand words to really breathe; we edited the bloody hell out of it to make the word limit! But I love that short story every bit as much as I do *Times Squared*, and I'm just as proud of it.

**MK:** Can we hope to see more fiction from you in the not-too-distant future, *Who* related or otherwise?

**RC:** I sincerely hope so. Of course, it took me forty-some years to get the first one out there, but I definitely mean to speed up the process a bit from here on out! I've been working on an original novel about the end of the world, which is becoming a pretty played-out subject in modern sci-fi and horror fiction, but I have a creepy, entertaining concept in mind that I've not seen anything similar before. It's a story that's transfixed me for several years now. I'm about 150 pages in and determined to finish the novel in 2018, with the hope that *Times Squared* will help me find representation to shop it among publishers in 2019. In the meantime, I'm still hammering away at NASA news releases and other media products, and I'm plugging away at various short stories. I've also got four screenplays I'm very proud of, and I try now and again to shop those around among my contacts in the movie industry.



I sometimes think I should have set aside my everyday job duties and taken a more serious stab at a career writing fiction, but I'm too grateful for the life I have, my beautiful wife Heather and our son Declan, to really regret my choices. And I've had some valuable life lessons along the way. I went through a pancreatectomy in early 2015 that revealed the organ had been choked with precancerous cells; the doctor told me if he hadn't removed it, I'd have been fighting for my life or already dead within two years. That would have been early 2017, right? So basically, the whole last year of my life, and every day from here on out, is a gift. That's how I choose to look at it. So I'm not going to stress out about how long it takes me to finish this novel or that short story; if I'm lucky enough to finish something I like and other people like it too and it gets out there one day, that's just icing on the cake at this point. Hey, I've already contributed in a small way to the *Doctor Who* universe, with a novel that was well-received and which I was able to dedicate to my beloved family; what success could ever truly measure up to that?

Rick Cross lives and works in Huntsville, Alabama. You can follow him on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/rickcrosswriter](http://www.facebook.com/rickcrosswriter). To learn more about the Lethbridge-Stewart series, visit [www.candy-jar.co.uk/books/lethbridgestewartshome.html](http://www.candy-jar.co.uk/books/lethbridgestewartshome.html). You can order *Times Squared* directly from Candy Jar or on Amazon.



# BOOKMARKS IN TIME

## THE ADVENTURES OF K9 AND OTHER MECHANICAL CREATURES

It was late 1979. Just as the 1970s were drawing to a close, so too was I reaching the end of my own first decade. I'd grown up as a regular *Doctor Who* viewer, my head littered with vague, fragmented recollections of the Pertwee era and rather more solid memories of the (then) current incumbent, Tom Baker, and the adventures that had played out across so many Saturday tea-times. Marvel had launched their *Doctor Who Weekly* just a few weeks earlier which had sparked-off a sudden obsession of mine to learn everything I could about the programme's past. Those formative issues of the *Weekly*, with their Photo-Files and features on the series' main monsters and the earliest Hartnell stories were devoured with great appreciation but it was not enough so, in the absence of television repeats (home video was not even imaginable to a 9-year-old like myself back then), I turned towards the novelisations.

I borrowed some from the library but also decided that my pocket money, which had recently been getting spent on *Star Wars* figures or Micronauts, might now be better invested in Target books. I had already bought one, *Doctor Who and the Cybermen* by Gerry Davis, and now had enough money for another so I went back to my local branch of John Menzies one Saturday morning in search of another suitable title to purchase.

There were maybe 8-or-so of the novels sitting there on the shelf available to buy that morning, but what grabbed my attention was another book sitting there with them which was taller and slimmer. The predominantly silver look of the cover made it feel somewhat Christmassy and it had K9 on it, but also a Cyberman. I had a thing about Cybermen at that time – monsters I could remember from way back (yes, all of four years ago!) that I knew had been major opponents of *Doctor Who* and who I was convinced would someday return.

Picking the book up and flicking through it, I found that it had photographs inside! So that was it, decision made – this was to be my purchase that morning. I could learn far more about old *Doctor Who* from a factual book with photos than I would from reading a novelisation of a single story, and with a lot less effort, too (even an 80-page Terrance Dicks novelisation took a bit of reading for a 9-year-old!).

So, for those of you unfamiliar with Terrance Dicks' *The Adventures Of K9 And Other Mechanical Creatures*, let me outline the contents of this 96-page tome. The first half is a potted history of the K9 character told from the point of view of the Doctor and as such offers up brief synopses of the stories from *The Invisible Enemy* through to *The Armageddon Factor* (excepting *Image of the Fendahl*). In this respect, the book almost serves as a follow-on from Dicks' earlier works, *The Doctor Who Monster Book* and *The Second Doctor Who Monster Book*.

The second half of the book then documents a rather random selection of mechanical beings which had cropped up in the TV series up to that point – some of them fitting only very loosely under that nomenclature, hence we have mention of Robomen, Autons, Krotons and Arcturus among the more obvious representatives such as Quarks, Chumblies, Yeti and Mummies.

Only a paragraph or two were afforded to each, so hard facts were scarce. Take the entry for the Servo Robot, for example:

*"I met this robot in an abandoned space rocket. It was only trying to do its job – but it nearly disposed of me and my companions in the process!"*

So, for a novice fan like me, that wasn't much to go on – not only did I not know which story it had been in, I didn't even know which Doctor may have encountered it. And then there's Professor Kettlewell's K-1 robot from *Robot*, named throughout only as the Giant Robot. Still, it was Dicks' own creation so maybe that's what we should call it!



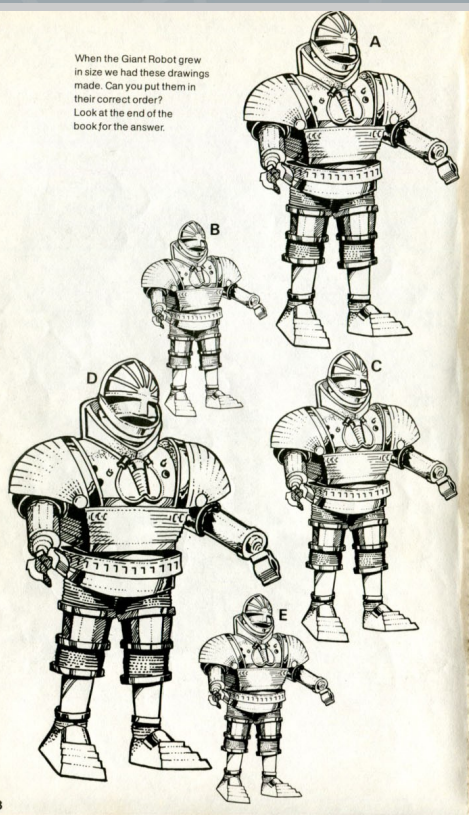
The book posed as many questions as it answered. The photographs sometimes carried no caption at all, or sometimes had one that was decidedly unhelpful: for instance, a scene of the Drahvins and a Chumbly from *Galaxy Four* was presented only with the quip: "Fancy one of these for your next school outing?" And then there's the photograph of K9 with Romana, except that the accompanying text states

"Here's K9 having a spot of bother with the Commander of the Capitol Guard..." – presumably intended for the image which appeared 5 pages previous!

Given how few issues of *Doctor Who Weekly* had appeared by then, this book must have been my first exposure to images of *Galaxy Four* or Mechanoids (sic). I know my friend and I were baffled by the brief mention of Voc Robots and



When the Giant Robot grew in size we had these drawings made. Can you put them in their correct order? Look at the end of the book for the answer.



An illustration of the Giant Robot

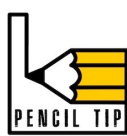
Dums, for which there was no illustration, and I well remember him excitedly telling me one day a few weeks later: "The Vocs are the Robots of Death!" Well, that's how we had always referred to them!

Interestingly, this book made mention of the 'Robot Knight', the simple sword-wielding automaton created by Linx in *The Time Warrior*. I had no recollection of this but my friend did, and the book seemed to act as confirmation that this was a famous *Doctor Who* enemy, so we considered it as such, for a time. Strangely, the Robot Knight has seldom warranted a mention since in *Doctor Who* publications.

Throughout the book are illustrated puzzles, many of which are ridiculously easy (especially the maze). The solutions to these are given at the rear of the book and include some hilariously incorrect answers, such as suggesting that a Mechnoid would leave a trail of human-shaped footprints as it crossed a sandy landscape!

Reading *DWW* and *DWM* regularly, as well as novelisations, soon brought my *Who* knowledge to a level where the K9 book could be dispensed with. Nevertheless the book remains a curio and a permanent reminder of that magical time around Christmas 1979 when most of the Whoniverse was an undiscovered country that I was just beginning to explore for the first time.

| David P. May



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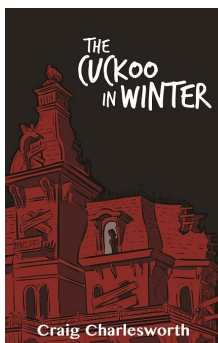
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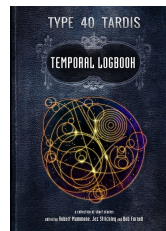
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# CLASS

## IS NOW IN SESSION

### REVIEWING THE CLASS NOVELS

I've been playing a fun game lately, and asking anyone I know with a passing knowledge of *Doctor Who* (the 'casual fans' as they're termed) to name the spin-off shows. Most of them named *Torchwood*; a couple recalled a children's series with an old companion (*The Sarah Jane Adventures*); and one was convinced a big-budget film had been made recently. (Interestingly, I assumed they were getting confused and meant *The Day of the Doctor*, but they were talking about *Deep Breath*.)

Not one person mentioned *Class* or knew about it. Worse still, a couple of those people are huge fans of Patrick Ness' novels, and they thought I was kidding when I told them about the show. The utter lack of impact which *Class* made cannot be underestimated.

It was, of course, not helped by no publicity whatsoever from the BBC, nor by eight episodes of highly variable quality that needed not so much a complete rewrite but an editor to step in and force Ness to listen.

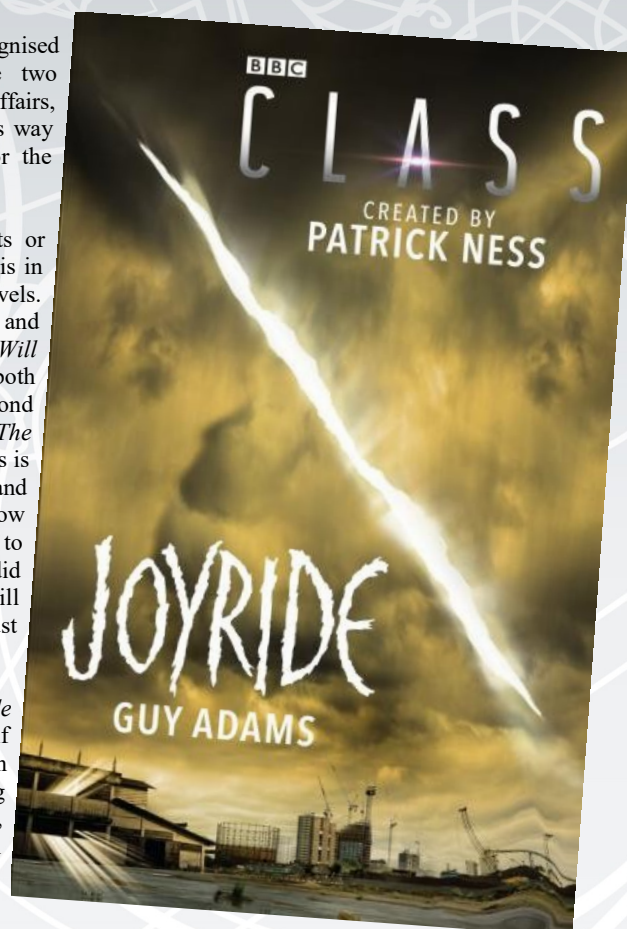
It's telling that the episodes which ranked the highest when *Doctor Who Magazine* surveyed them were the opener (which everybody

watched) and then episodes 6 and 7, i.e. the good

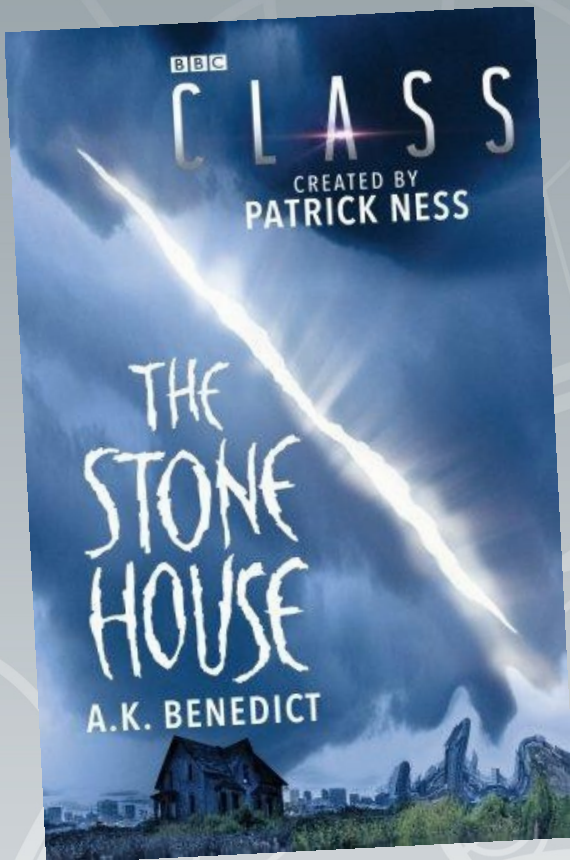
ones. Those who stuck with it recognised quality when they saw it. Those two episodes were more character-led affairs, and it's this approach which made its way to the three tie-in novels written for the show.

Although none of the books' adverts or publicity material will tell you, there is in fact a reading order for the three novels. The first is *Joyride* by Guy Adams, and the second is *What She Does Next Will Astound You* by James Goss. These both appear to be set a little after the second episode of the series. The third is *The Stone House* by A K Benedict, and this is set after the third episode as April and Ram are an item by then. I don't know why the publishers go out of their way to not tell you these things, but they did this with the Twelfth Doctor and Bill trilogy of novels, too, so I guess it's just a 'thing', albeit an annoying one.

Back to the books though. *Joyride* begins with a schoolgirl killing herself after nicking a car and tearing through London before crashing into a betting shop. All is not what it seems though, as the girl in question had been temporarily possessed. The 'joyride'







of the title refers to a secret immersive experience offered to the rich, where they can jump into the bodies

of other humans and take them over for a short period of time. Corrupt owner + stolen alien tech = profit.

It's a good idea and makes for a mostly good story. Adams captures the leads well, especially Ram, and clearly enjoys exploring the relationship between Quill and Charlie, examining the ins and outs and morality of such a bond. The sex when it comes (and of course it does) feels a bit awkward and gratuitous, but that's *Doctor Who* spin-offs for you. I actually feel *Class* on screen handled this far better than, say, *Torchwood* did, but that's damning with faint praise, and here in this book it feels more like the latter than the former.

Where things are less good in this book is with some of the plot mechanics, which rely entirely on chance and people doing extremely stupid things. This is always the sign of a story running out of steam, and Adams tries to justify the stupidity by having the antagonists reflect that they've been sloppy, but I don't buy it. It doesn't stay in keeping with everything else and smacks of needing a resolution but being unsure as to how to get one.

The book is also riddled with proof-reading errors, especially with regards to grammar,

which is extremely off-putting. This lack of proof-reading is something that plagues all three books: characters will have conversations with themselves because the wrong name has been used in error, or people will suddenly have weapons where they dropped them only moments before and made a fuss about this. I'm not sure what happened here, beyond someone not paying attention, but it's very notable and very poor form.

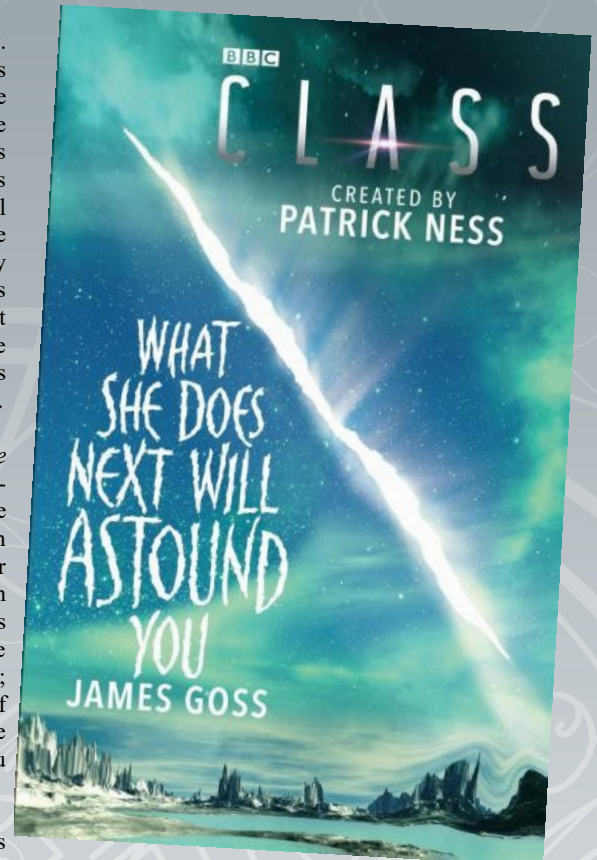
Our second novel, *What She Does Next...*, is a beautifully-drawn satire on YouTube vlogging and clickbait with some VR gaming chucked in for good measure. It isn't subtle in its approach, but neither is clickbait so it works well. The chapter titles are especially fun; parodies of the sort of sensationalist headlines you see online all the time, which you can tell Goss had fun creating.

Goss rarely lets us down with his work, and this is no different to

his usual high form. This is another very good story for character, with Quill being the star and April close behind. He also really looks into the impact Ram's lost leg would have in reality and explores this in a believable and important way; the sort of way the actual television show never bothered to do. Both Goss and Guy Adams before seem to have a better grasp of the characters, motivations and mechanics of *Class*' universe and potential than Patrick Ness himself did.

Again though, the book is let down by its end, which feels far too neat. After all the trauma experienced by the children in the book, the plot just resolves and everyone goes about their day, which doesn't feel entirely right. You'd imagine that half of Coal Hill School being aware they were abducted by aliens would be a big thing, but apparently not. I suppose this is no different to the approach of *Doctor Who* and *The Sarah Jane Adventures*, where everyone just carries on their way, but it really stands out here as everything else feels pretty watertight.

The final novel, *The Stone House*, is far less variable and more just a shrug of a novel. Set in a haunted house (ish) and telling of aliens, online conspiracies and refugees, it should be fine, but unlike the previous two novels, none of the characters whatsoever feel true to life, with Quill being especially off. Imagine Quill as a more acidic Sarah Jane Smith with a couple of knives and you're close.



I wonder if Benedict was able to read the scripts beforehand, because there is zero evidence of that here. It means that the entire story feels extremely odd and as a result it never gels or works. If this were a totally standalone tale with original characters, I think I'd have enjoyed it a lot more. As a tie-in novel to *Class* though, it completely fails because it really doesn't tie in at all.

Conversely, in that sense *The Stone House* is arguably the closest to *Class* on screen in some ways. There is some potential there, but the writing feels way off and it never works. It's frustrating as deep down there is something good there, but you'd never recommend it to anyone.

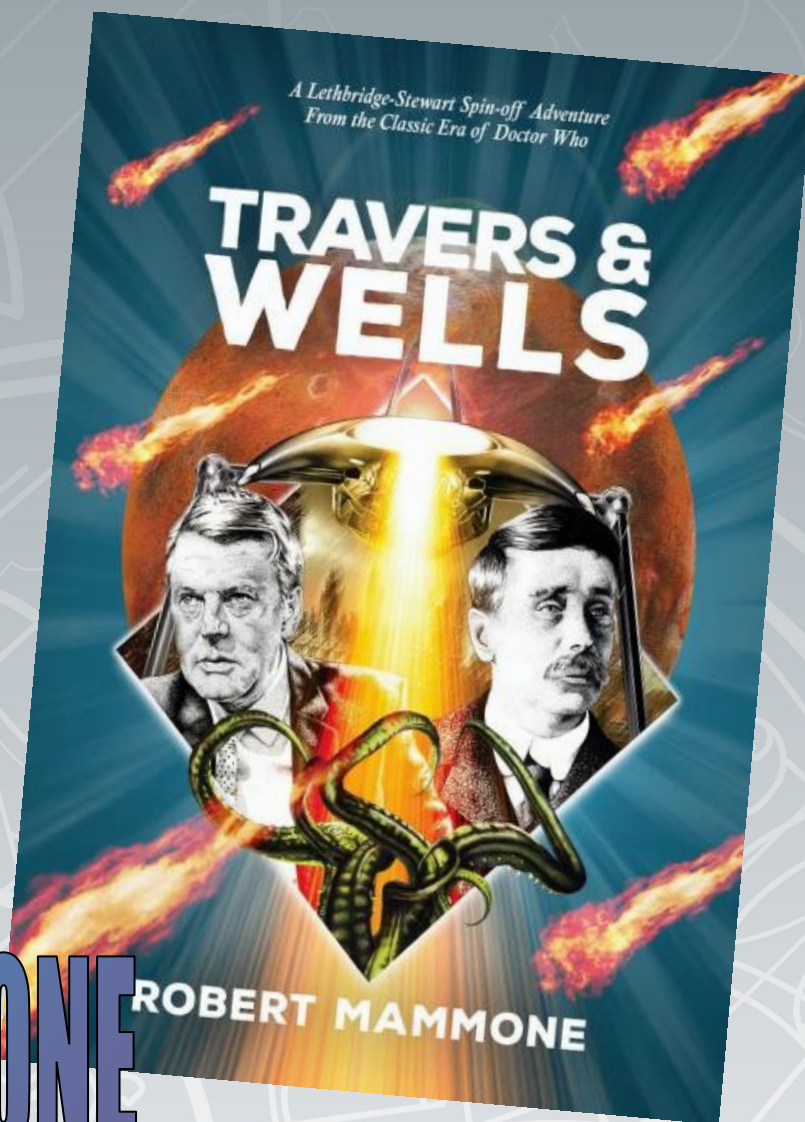
How very like the TV show.

I suspect in the future someone will try to resurrect *Class*. For now though, *Class* remains a badly-executed oddity with some very exciting and good highs, a lot of middling incident, and some crushing lows. If you want to see the best of *Class*, skip to episodes 6 and 7 of the show, or better still read the novels by Adams and Goss. *Class* here is *Buffy* meets *Doctor Who* and that's an exciting premise. I hope someone else sees this and runs with it one day.

| Nick Mellish



# IN CONVERSATION WITH AUTHOR ROBERT MAMMONE



With *Whotopia 32* focused on all things bookish, it's a pleasure to sit down with long-time author and former *The Doctor Who Project* editor Rob Mammone. Rob's involvement in fandom and writing covers more than two decades, and includes fanzines in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the UK, ranging from *TSV* and *Whotopia* to *Circus* and *Sonic Screwdriver*. Crossing into fictive works, Rob's short story, *Roses*, was published in *DWM 214*, and he's also had two short stories published by Candy Jar Books. As well as contributing a brace of novellas to *The Doctor Who Project*, Rob co-edited the supernatural anthology *Grave Warnings*, and the *Doctor Who* anthology *The Temporal Logbook*, both published by Pencil Tip Publishing.

**Whotopia:** How and when did you get interested in writing?

**Rob Mammone:** I've written from a very early age. I can remember writing a story when I was

ten for my librarian that basically created an Aboriginal myth as an explanation for the shape of a hill near the town I lived in at the time, (cultural appropriation didn't exist in the 1980s, folks!). My librarian told me she arranged to have the story published in the Education Department's newsletter to teachers across the state, so if my memory is correct, that would've been my first 'professional' publication. I really should check the archives at the State Library to make sure that isn't a false memory!

I think it is fair to say that *Doctor Who* inspired my love of genre fiction and when I started High School, I began reading all the fantasy novels I could get my hands on – Asimov, Clarke, Tolkien, Donaldson, Brooks, Eddings, Gemmell, Kay – these were all foundational texts for me in the same way far more literate readers than me regard writers like Shakespeare, Faulkner and Hemingway. I'm sure I started and abandoned dozens of stories inspired by the writers I've mentioned. My first piece of writing in that period to get

published was a fantasy short story that received an encouragement award in a regional writing competition.

After that, I tried my hand at writing horror short fiction, and well remember the rejection letter I received which put me off writing for a long time. After I got over myself, I drifted back into *Doctor Who* fandom and really cut my teeth writing *Doctor Who* fan fiction for fanzines in Australia and Britain during the 1990s.

**W:** What is it about writing that appeals to you? And what frustrates you with writing?

**RM:** Part of the appeal is ego – that I could be as good a writer as those authors who inspired me in the first place. Experience has disproved that particular fantasy! On the other hand, it is very satisfying to receive a positive review or comment, especially when the rejections are piling up and you're wondering if it's better to be asleep instead of sweating over a draft after



midnight.

The most frustrating aspect of writing is the actual writing process. Or more specifically, getting sufficiently motivated to turn on the laptop and put in the hard work of writing. I'm a confidence writer – if things are going well, my motivation is up, but when the process is a struggle, and the words are hard to come by, my motivation begins to dissipate. Oddly, I enjoy the editing process far more than the writing, likely because I know I'm closer to the end than the beginning!

**W: You've written for both *Whotopia* and *The Doctor Who Project*, how did that come about?**

**RM:** With regards to *Whotopia*, I had written a number of nonfiction articles about *Doctor Who* when I was writing for fanzines in the 1990s. I think it was the return of the series that spurred my interest to return to writing similar pieces. In the end, I think I only wrote one short piece, but writing for Bob certainly piqued my interest to write fiction.

I had known about *The Doctor Who Project* work for a long while, visiting the site occasionally and checking out the stories as they appeared. I particularly enjoyed the work of John Gordon-Swogger, who I regard as one of the best *Doctor Who* fiction writers out there, and a jewel in *TDWP*'s crown. His work is epic in scope and his world building is evocative, plus he deftly handles the main characters, which is a real skill as there is no television performance to act as a crutch for the writing. One reason I wrote for *TDWP* was to be part of a stable of writers that included John. His work certainly inspired me to try to write as well as he does.

Leading up to writing for *TDWP*, I hadn't done much writing at all for a long time. But the bug was still with me, and I had that experience of writing for fanzines a decade before. So I approached Bob and he was happy to give me a shot.

**W: You contributed several stories to the *TDWP* and *Brief Encounters* ranges, starting with *Dreadnought* for Season 35. What made you want to write for *TDWP*? Looking back, which of the stories you wrote are you most proud of?**

**RM:** With the return of the new series, and the more characterful approach under RTD's control, I wanted to give writing *Doctor Who* fiction a shot. As I mentioned earlier, John Gordon-Swogger's writing was a real inspiration, with his use of deep history and a grand historical sweep appealing to me.



The cover for Rob's story "Dreadnought"

For me it's hard to split two of the stories I wrote for *TDWP*. *Dreadnought*, which at that time was the longest piece of fiction I'd ever started and completed, and embodied all the sorts of things I enjoy – cosmic horror, historical references, (I read *The Economist* regularly, and the opening to the story was directly inspired by the editorial tone the newspaper takes), and what I hope was an exciting adventure for the reader.

The other story, *Mask of Anhur*, probably edges *Dreadnought* out in terms of quality. Again, it has events happening against a broad sweep of history, and a monster that is more monstrous because of its totally alien nature. I particularly enjoyed writing the character of Alice, dealing with the recent death of her archaeologist husband and facing an alien threat. I thought she came across really well and am proud how she turned out.

I also really enjoyed writing *This is How the World Ends*, a *Brief Encounter* for *TDWP* featuring the Sixth Doctor and Peri. The Sixth Doctor's era on television barely started before it was euthanized, and I've tried to play my part in fan fiction to do something to bring the era back to life. I particularly enjoyed writing for Peri, trying to add more depth to her and make her a more rounded figure capable of compassion and empathy, certainly more than the Doctor. I think the story packs a punch and is worth reading, if anyone is interested.

**W: You also spent four years as the Editor of the *Doctor Who Project*. What was that experience like?**

**RM:** In a word, educational! It taught me about working collaboratively with Bob and Jez, giving and receiving feedback. The variety of stories that came through and the editing involved, certainly helped my own writing to develop. If you aspire to be a writer, you need to read widely, inside and outside your chosen genre. Being editor certainly provided plenty of material for me to read and learn. And it is satisfying to shepherd a story from draft form to being published on the website, helping the writer iron out a problem, suggesting a fix that they accept and generally enabling people who want to write to improve their craft and branch out into other areas. I mean, I played a small role in that, all the hard work was done by the writers.

**W: What sort of stories did you look for during your time as the project's editor? Can you think of one story you're really proud you commissioned?**

**RM:** *Doctor Who*, to my mind, is an exciting adventure in time and space (where have we heard that before?!). Which is the most obvious thing in the world, but actually fitting the remit can prove harder than writers think. You can't simply slap together a story, fill it with tired tropes, and lift wholesale dialogue from the show and drop it onto the page and expect the reader to happily go along with the writer instead of setting the story alight and moving onto something else.

So stories that quickly engaged me, and proved to be filled with action, great dialogue, well drawn characters, and an exciting plot that was tied up neatly at the end, always found favour with me.

As I mentioned before, John Gordon-Swogger would always prove fascinating and rewarding reading. I especially enjoyed editing his two-part Silurian / Master tale, in the most recent *TDWP* season. I'm not entirely sure why John doesn't write outside the genre, but if he did, I'd be first in line to snap up a copy. He really is an excellent writer.

**W: As an editor, what was your pet hate when looking over (a) submissions and (b) drafts?**

**RM:** A and B can be answered in one go, as they're often interrelated. Even though *TDWP* is a non-paying publisher, I always tried to be as professional as I could in my dealings with those who were writing for it. In that regard, you expect the writers to present drafts that were edited and ready to be published, aside from any editorial changes / comments. I occasionally received poorly written drafts in need of drastic edits. Memo to writers – the best way to make life hard for your editor is



effectively to present a draft that he needs a page one re-write to make it work. Don't!

**W:** Back in the day, your short story *Roses* appeared in DWM. How did it feel to have a story in the DWM "Brief Encounter" range accepted? Were you surprised?

**RM:** I was bloody surprised! I remember being inspired to write the story by a *Brief Encounter* in I think DWM 180 or 181, which featured a short story involving Daleks vs Cybermen, a classic fan trope. I thought, if this writer can do it, well so can I. Looking back, that was simultaneously naïve and completely egotistical. When I received the letter, (which I still have), accepting my story, I was absolutely thrilled. The idea that I would have a story published in DWM, after being a reader for over a decade was terrifying and very, very satisfying. It was a form of validation for all the hard work I had put into writing for fanzines. And while I never tried again, I can always remember the issue number (214) and the actor on the front cover (Janet Fielding)!

**W:** During the same time as working with *Whotopia* and *TDWP*, you were working with other publishers and had work professionally published. How did this come about?

**RM:** After I started writing for *TDWP*, I decided in 2009 to try my hand at writing short horror fiction. The internet has created a huge number of venues for writers, which allowed me to be published where much earlier I may not have been able to. It was essentially a process of writing the stories, which came very easily at the time, and then shopping them around to as many websites as I could.

**W:** How would you compare writing for a fan project versus a professional paying project?

**RM:** It's the same. It has to be the same. Whether it's a fan project or professional, I owe it to the publisher and the reader to present my work and myself as professionally as I could. Otherwise, not only are you short-changing yourself, but even worse, you're short-changing the reader.

The writing is the same, whoever you're trying to write for. And that is sitting down and doing the work. There is no muse sitting on your shoulder feeding you lines to type – it can be hard graft to come up with an idea and bring it

to life with prose. As they say, life wasn't meant to be easy, and for all but the very gifted, neither is writing.

**W:** From there, you got involved with the Lethbridge-Stewart range of novels from Candy Jar Books. How did this come about?

**RM:** Like a lot of fans, I'd been aware of the range for a while. I'd purchased the first book,

spy thriller, (in hindsight, the 5000 word length militated against something potentially as complicated as my idea), and the other was a horror tinged piece that had shades of Nigel Kneale thrown in. Andy accepted the latter (quite rightly). He felt the latter story idea was a better fit for the release date, and also my own writing experience. It was really a matter of luck in terms of there being a slot available. If I'd waited a week or two, I may've missed out completely.

**W:** Your first published piece for the Lethbridge-Stewart range was the short story *Eve of the Fomorians*. Can you tell us how this came about and where you got the idea for the story?

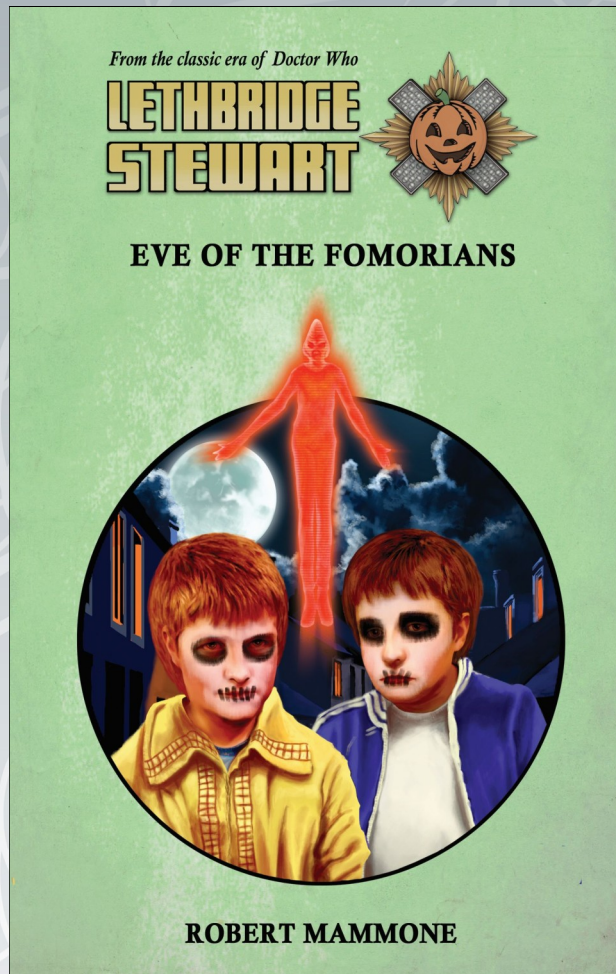
**RM:** The remit was to feature Anne Travers, Bill Bishop and Samson Ware, without Lethbridge-Stewart. It seemed a good fit to have the story, released at Halloween, take place over Halloween. The story had to fit into a gap where the trio had visited a friend, and were returning home. So, a diversion on a lonely road, in a seemingly abandoned village, on the night the dead walk the Earth, seemed right up my alley. It was a fun story to write, and in certain ways, almost wrote itself and I certainly look on it with a great deal of fondness.

**W:** How do you find writing for pre-existing characters? Is it confining at all? Are there any specific challenges?

**RM:** If you've not read some of the source material, it is possible to 'wing it' with pre-existing characters, but I would strongly urge against it. That said, I hadn't had much experience with writing for the three main leads, so did do some research beforehand.

Writing for Anne Travers was easiest, as we have *Web of Fear* to provide a 'voice' to assist with her dialogue. Bishop and Ware were a little trickier, but again, reading some of the source material, and also the background material available on the Candy Jar site, was invaluable.

I didn't find the process confining. You simply get on with the job, casting the characters into an adventure story with overtones of mystery and horror. The expected reaction you get from the characters is about the same, no matter the genre you're writing in. I did my best to make the story as contemporary to its setting (late 1960s) with a few cultural references, (I like dropping in references to Rolling Stones songs, mainly because a lot of their work has darkish



*The Forgotten Son*, and had enjoyed it a great deal. I knew that Andy Frankham-Allen, the range editor, had been a long time writer in a number of genres, such as the *Space: 1889* novel range. I basically took a chance and sent him an email asking if there were any slots available for the novel range (go big, people, not small!). He came back to me and said not at that time, but Candy Jar were looking for writers for shorter pieces. He requested some samples, which I sent along with a link to my blog (so 2010!) which contains links to all my short horror fiction, and then lo and behold he asked me to pitch for a piece that was due to come out Halloween 2016.

I sent two pitches – one a Cold War inspired



overtones, and *Sympathy for the Devil* was too good to pass up!), that I think help the reader position themselves with regards to the story.

**W: Following on from this, you got to write Travers and Wells, a novella for their Lethbridge-Stewart spin-off range. How does one go from having a short story published to having a novella published?**

**RM:** For me, I went from a short story to a novella by delivering what was required on time. In a sense, I proved myself reliable and capable of delivering a draft that was basically, with some editorial input, ready to go. Plus, I provided a story that was entertaining and fit the requirements for a spooky, Halloween tinged tale.

In terms of the writing, it's obviously a much bigger leap. I re-read *War of the Worlds*, making notes as I went along. I also did some research on HG Wells' early life as a teacher, and for my sins, re-watched *Timelash* to get a sense of his portrayal in the *Doctor Who* universe. I had to do some research to ground the story a bit more in reality, looking at maps of London in the late 1890s, checking up the political situation in Europe at the time, and make sure my insertion of a character from history broadly matched what that character was doing at that time. I also went over some photos of London during the Blitz for some inspiration of imagery that is used towards the end of the novella.

Coupled with that, I had to develop a storyline that would sustain the 45000-word limit, and not only give the novella a satisfying ending, but allow a hand off to the next writer in the range.

So there were a lot of things going on in the background. Whereas a short story can be kept to one location and stick to one theme / topic, the novella required a wider range of characters and locations. It was definitely a challenge, and aside from the unpublished novel I have sitting on my hard drive, the longest piece I've ever written. You learn a lot about yourself when you commit

to something like this – your ability to time manage, to pace yourself, to structure a long-form narrative, and juggle events and characters into hopefully an entertaining piece of writing. From the safety of post publication, I look back on the period writing the novella with a great deal of satisfaction, but there were some anxious times when I thought I may've bitten off more than I could chew. But I got there in the end!

**W: Are there any plans for you to pen any other stories for the range?**

**RM:** I'm currently working on a novel for the Lethbridge-Stewart range but until it's announced unfortunately I can't say anything. But writing it is proving a great deal of fun.

**W: You've penned stories in several different genres – science fiction, horror – is there a genre you prefer to write for over another? Does writing for different genres pose any specific challenges?**

**RM:** I've often said writing short horror fiction is easiest as all you have to do is create an atmosphere over 5000 words and inflict all your nightmares on your characters for the duration! Admittedly, that is glib, but it's pretty true. If you can build and sustain an atmosphere that unsettles, you're half way to completing a short piece of horror writing.

I often tend to end up throwing in horror elements into my stories, no matter what the genre is. For instance, I wrote a sword and sorcery novella at the start of 2017 that as it went along became more and more horrific, even though ostensibly it was meant to be grounded in fantasy. I can't ever imagine myself writing a genre piece that is cheery in outlook, because that isn't really me, I suppose. I mean, I don't go around with a gloomy cloud hovering over my head, but my reading tastes tend towards the bleak, more often than not. But then I usually surprise myself!

**W: Do you have a favourite author and / or book? What is it that attracts you to him / her / it?**

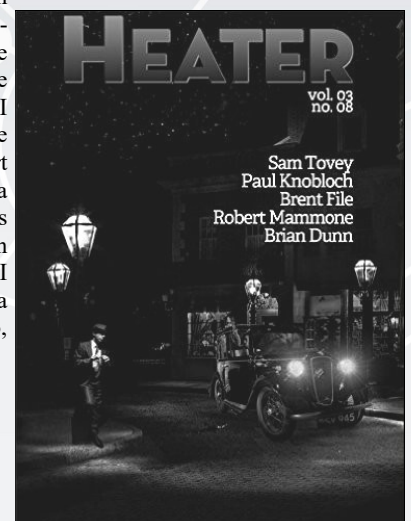
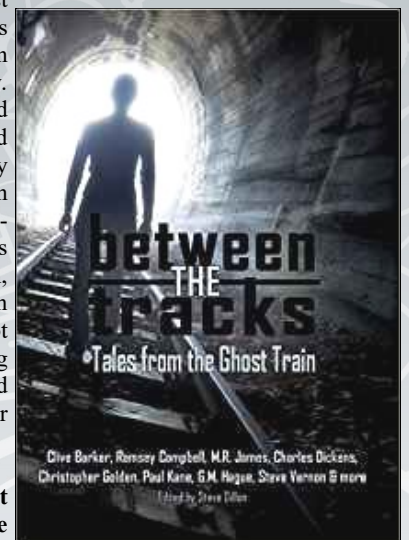
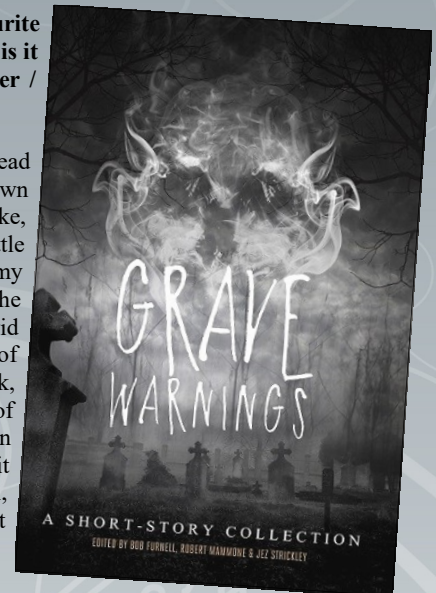
**RM:** I almost exclusively read genre fiction, to my own detriment, but I like what I like, and at my age, there's very little incentive to change. So, my favourite fantasy writer is the late, much lamented David Gemmell, a British author of gritty fantasy. His first book, *Legend*, is my favourite, full of powerful prose and well-drawn characters. It's amazing that it was his first published novel, given how well developed it is.

My favourite book, however, well... I've read thousands of books and picking one is almost impossible, but right now, it is *The Summer Tree*, by Canadian fantasy writer Guy Gavriel Kay. Inspired by Tolkien, populated by many European myths and legends, it's a wonderfully written book full of emotion and unbelievably well-conceived characters. It owes almost its entirety to Tolkien, but Kay adds his own sensibilities to it. If you're not weeping several times during the narrative, you're either dead or have a heart of stone. Or both.

**W: Can you tell us what you're working on at the moment?**

**RM:** As I mentioned before, I'm working on a new Lethbridge-Stewart novel. I've put a couple of short stories on the backburner as a result, which I intend getting back to in due course. I've written enough short horror fiction to put out a collection, but again, that's waiting the completion and sign off on the novel, before I contemplate submitting it to a publisher or do it myself. So, plenty of irons in the fire!

*Whotopia would like to thank Rob for taking time out to talk to us. Interview Questions by Richard Peevers, Bob Furnell & Jez Strickley*





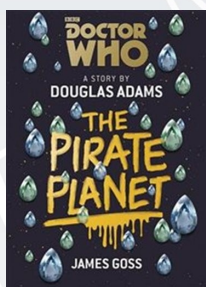
# DOUGLAS ADAMS AND DOCTOR WHO



There are three (ish) Douglas Adams stories that aired showing his take on the Doctor, one of which was just completed, being given the animated treatment. These stories – *Shada*, *The Pirate Planet*, and *City of Death* – have been novelised by veteran *Doctor Who* authors Gareth Roberts and James Goss. Yes, there is a new book out of an unaired Adams script called *The Krikkitmen*, but at the time of this article, I have yet to come across it in my bookstore travels. Reading these novelisations are all well and good, but is Adams' famous wit captured, and do they add more to the story, rather than just reiterating what we already watched?

*The Pirate Planet* by James Goss

"This novelisation is based on the first draft scripts by Douglas Adams. So it probably isn't what you're expecting."



There are four main points that caught my eye in this novelisation – three of them won't take up much of your time, but the fourth might...

## 1. A nod to *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*...

On page nineteen there was a blink and you'll miss it reference to another Adams work, one you may have heard of:

*"An even better question is what is the*

*meaning of existence? Someone immediately suggested building a computer [...]"*

If forty-two was mentioned somewhere in that reference I would have lost it, but perhaps that would have been a tad *too* on the nose. However, if you haven't watched the adaptations or have read the book from which this reference came, basically, a huge super-computer was built in order to discover what the answer is to life, the universe, and, well, everything. Whether this nod was in the script or an Easter egg placed in there by Goss, it was fan moment.

## 2. The Doctor and Romana...

There were some spot-on interactions between the Doctor and Lady Romana. They were perfectly written to the point where you could vividly picture the scene in your head – with or without viewing the episode. One simple example I may have laughed aloud at (in public, mind you) was on page 41 when the TARDIS was losing control:

*"What's happening?" yelled Romana over the din. [...]"*

*"Oh, nothing very much," he said, clinging to the hat stand as nonchalantly as possible. He managed a sort-of-sauntering fall onto the controls, [...]"*

Don't lie, you definitely pictured that in your head. Laughing aloud, however, was optional.

## 3. Romanadvoratrelundar...

While I enjoyed the novel greatly, there was one creative choice that irked me at the beginning. There was no abbreviating Romana's name, and her full name was used for quite some time. The Doctor did abbreviate Romana's name to 'Romy,' but we were quick to learn Romana didn't approve of that nickname. However, in regards to reading "Romanadvoratrelundar" over and over again? You know when you see a long word and your brain just makes up a garbled mess in order to continue? Yeah. Please, mention her full name once, for our brains' sakes!

## 4. The Captain and Mr. Fibuli...

Now, these two characters were irksome in the serial that aired. The Captain was too comedic to be taken seriously, and Mr. Fibuli was supposed to be portraying a meek and timid person, but I felt it didn't come across as such. In the novel, however, I was much happier with how the characters were described. Since it was written down, we were able to read Fibuli's thoughts, and his constant fear of dying at any moment, paired with false bravery when his time hadn't come. Also, I know cupboard is the English equivalent to a closet, but in my American brain, picturing Fibuli hiding in a small cabinet, made him appear much meeker, something he quite didn't look like in the serial.

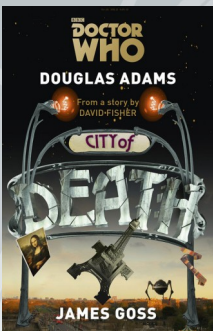
The Captain was certainly saved in the



novelisation. His description made me visualise a rusted, slapped-together robot with minimal human parts left. It reminded me of a rusty, robot Viking, with a full beard, and red face from yelling. We learned more about his past, and the ultimate reveal of who he truly is, and that he was being used, made me sympathise more with this character that shouts those bizarre comical things like by the ‘seven dragons of hades!’ and such. We see more compassion and more humanity in the Captain in the novel, and I wish this version made it to the screen. Despite how he was described, this character was beautiful.

*City of Death* by James Goss

“‘Yes.’ The Doctor nodded. ‘It looked almost like he Was trying to draw...’ He stumbled and then found the phrase: ‘Trying to draw a crack in time.’”



Out of all the Douglas Adams serials, I will readily admit, this is the one I happened to have watched the least. One of my favorite lines came from this: “What a wonderful butler, he’s so violent.” However, watching it so little wasn’t due to me not liking it, it was just the amount of time I had on my hands,

and funny enough, time is quite the matter here, cracks in time, specifically. See kiddies? Classic Who is cool, too.

### 1. Scaroth...

I have no sympathy for Scaroth in the novelisation, just like I had no sympathy for him in the actual episode. He was just as distant and impersonal as he was portrayed in the aired version of the script. While, yes, we were able to read more about his background and his people, I still didn’t form any sympathy towards this creature despite him being the last of his kind. I feel plenty sympathy for the Doctor nowadays who is “the last of his kind” – he isn’t – but then again, I may be biased. The Doctor saves the human race, while if Scaroth survived, the human race wouldn’t exist.

### 2. The Art Critics...

When I first saw the serial, I nearly laughed my head off when I saw John Cleese, delighted at this little cameo. Now here I was thinking that was a tiny, insignificant character but in the novelisation, we get more insight into what was once deemed, at least in my eyes, the least important characters from the aired serial: the two art critics who view the TARDIS dematerializing in a small art museum. They gain the names of Harrison and Elena,

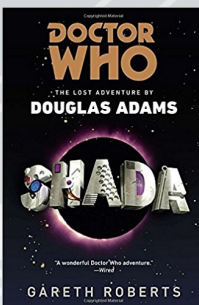
apparently a couple, not a working partnership. Elena wanted to show Harrison Paris, show him something he would find beautiful, but nothing worked until he saw the TARDIS. Funny. I never thought I would want to learn more about that little John Cleese cameo, and yet, I’m glad I had. A little side story to keep the story grounded in a fictional reality.

### 3. Humanizing Romana...?

While the Doctor is an alien, we see him as more human than anything, except for when he brings up incredible knowledge, and, oh yeah, pilots the TARDIS. However, compared to him, Romana had always been more alien in her personality. She wouldn’t understand much of the human traits the Doctor would perform, or understand humanity for that matter, but in this tale, Romana felt like another human companion. While she mentioned Gallifrey and other non-human ideas, Romana took in Paris, laughed with the Doctor, didn’t correct him at every turn, and appeared to have reached the Doctor’s level of “human.”

*Shada* by Gareth Roberts

“‘Yes,’ the Doctor said, lost in thought. ‘I wouldn’t be at all surprised if, one day, in a few hundred years’ time, someone will meet me and say, “Is that really the Doctor? How strange. He seems such a nice old man.”’”



SHADAAAAA! Now this was my first delve into *Doctor Who* novelisations, and the one I have devoured time and time again. If you want pure Douglas Adams wit mixed with *Doctor Who*, then look no further. *Shada* feels like it was ripped from the pages of *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*, filled with pure wit and absurdity. Now what made this reading experience so different from the prior two novels? Well, yes, it’s a different author, and while that could make a huge difference, it’s more along the lines of, *Shada* didn’t have many scenes recorded, so everything appeared fresh, exciting, and brand new.

### 1. Classic Adams Robots...

Adams appears to have a thing for sentient, back-talking / sassy robots. This comes in the form of the ship, the invisible ship, the main ship! A female-voiced craft who quite enjoyed all the little improvements the Doctor made, cooing, and laughing as she tried them out. But why would I enjoy this so darn much? I’m accustomed to robots in *Doctor Who*, and my favorite has to be K-9, but he’s a straight-talking, logical computer in the relative shape of

a dog. How funny is a logical, yet perfectly human-sounding (and reacting) ship? To me, very much so. It is nice to find a pattern in Adams’ works. There’s a mooney, sassy robot in *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*, and there’s an adamant robo-bird in *The Pirate Planet*. Now we have a full-blown robot in ship form.

### 2. Hitchhiker’s Surfaces Again...

Now, whether it was in the script or not, *Hitchhiker’s* made another appearance. What other book could possibly replace the most important book in the Universe? “An Earth classic, by one of the greatest writers in that planet’s history,” (376).

### 3. Chronotis and the Keeper...

There is one thing I will say about the scenes that were aired before all this reconstruction of the episode occurred. Isn’t it grand that the man who played Professor Chronotis was also the titular Keeper in Tom’s penultimate serial. For me it made the character that much more enjoyable, especially when I had to visualize the character in the novel. It just made the interaction between the Doctor and Chronotis that much more special. Two old Time Lords, or two old friends.

### 4. Timeless Wit...

The main enjoyable part was that Roberts was able to capture the good ol’ Adams wit, and share it with the world. Wit that would have gone to dust if not for this novelisation. We got such gems as “If this book should care to roam, box its ears and send it home,” or just happening to have an “I Am A Genius” ribbon in his pocket, or even the Doctor winning a mind battle by shouting “Put the kettle on.” This wit can’t be lost to time, and I’m so glad it was captured in writing for future generations to read. I know I’ve read the book at least four times since buying it, and I enjoy it each and every time. The humour of Adams never gets old, and Roberts captured that humour perfectly.

Now I can read all of these novelisations over and over to the point of memorising every line, as they were wonderfully written recreations of the Douglas Adams’ scripts. James Goss and Gareth Roberts did an amazing job keeping the wit and dry humour we’ve come to love from Douglas Adams, as well as expanding upon the stories, and capturing the characters of the Fourth Doctor and Romana quite well. A round of applause to these veteran *Who* authors, as they’ve done well to keep the spirit of Douglas Adams alive and well in the universe of *Doctor Who*.

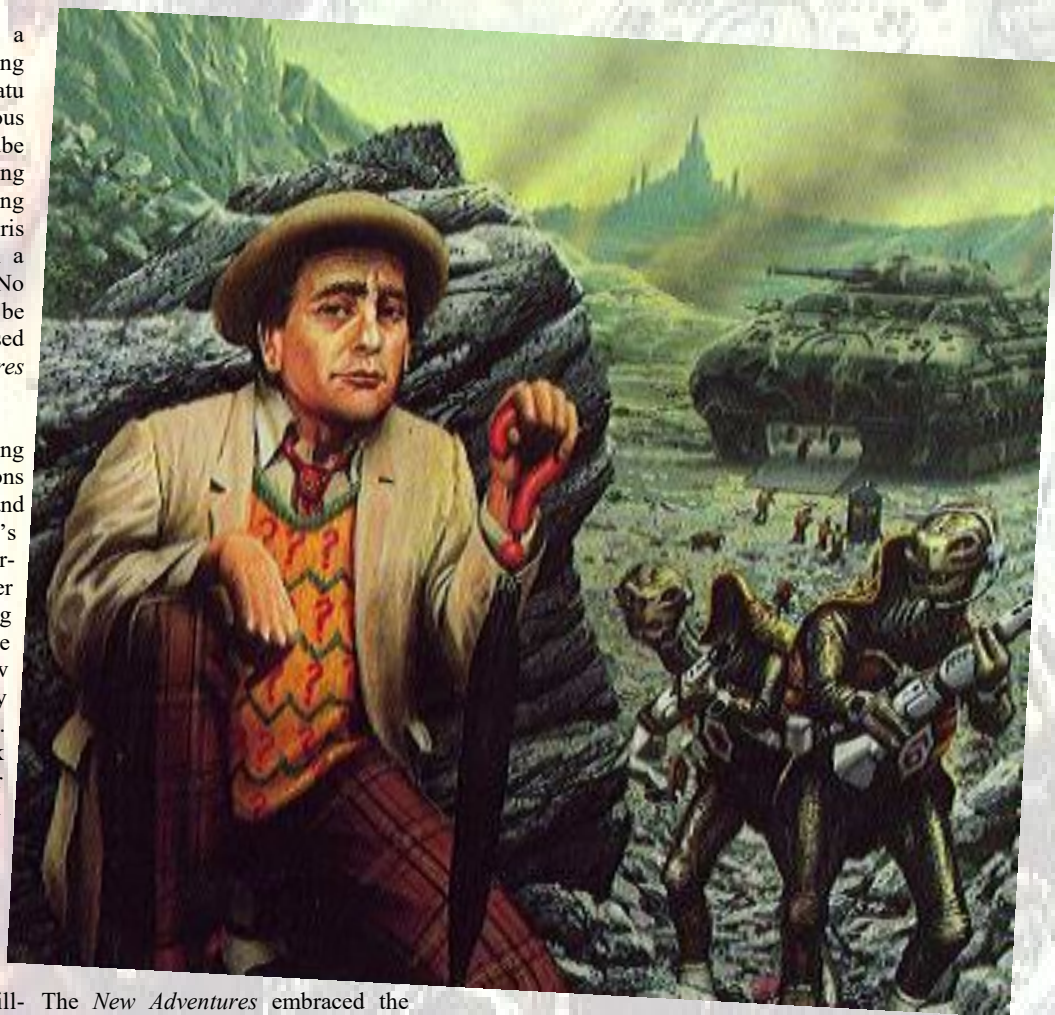
| Jessica Chaleff



# JUDGING A BOOK BY IT'S COVER

The Doctor crouches behind rocks on a pellucid quarry planet, Chelonians marching his way. A robotic sentry pursues Kadiatu Lethbridge-Stewart to an incongruous police box on the platform of a futuristic Tube station. Bernice Summerfield explores a rusting spacecraft, stoically shining a torch at a lunging vampire. Adjudicators Roz Forrester and Chris Cwej loom over a shifty alien criminal in a cream linen suit and Panama hat. No celebration of *Doctor Who* books would be complete without examining the unsurpassed artwork of Virgin Publishing's *New Adventures* of 1991 to 1997.

*Doctor Who* art has encompassed the dizzying highs of Chris Achilleos' Target novelisations and Dave Gibbons' *DWM* pencils, and lamentable lows of Paul Crompton's hallucinogenic *Doctor Who Annuals* and over-enthusiastic 1980s fan art. Over the later Target novelisations, Virgin Publishing accrued a talented stable of heirs to the Achilleos mantle: Alister Pearson, Andrew Skilleter, Colin Howard, Jeff Cummins, Tony Masero, Nik Spender, and Bill Donohoe. They had moved from Achilleos' comic-book primary-colours and monsters to moodier photo-realistic pieces, which aligned with editor Peter Darvill-Evans' aims. Whereas *Star Trek* and *Star Wars* spin-off novels emphasized their progenitors with 'floating-head' montages of familiar characters, Darvill-Evans wanted narrative images dramatizing scenes. Given the 'movie-poster *Doctor Who*' turned out in 2012, Darvill-Evans' initial 1990 memo would have Steven Moffat foaming at the mouth: "movie poster style; full bleed out to page edge; elements of swashbuckling, Who-ness, and sex appeal". Darvill-Evans' aspirations of a mainstream, almost New Wave SF artwork style, were most overtly signified by approaching Peter Elson – a respected artist of Harry Harrison, Philip K. Dick, *2001: A Space Odyssey* and many more paperbacks, who ultimately painted eleven *New Adventures* covers.



The *New Adventures* embraced the horizons jemmied open by Andrew Cartmel in 1988 and 1989, resulting in iconoclastic, impossible-to-televise classics *Timewyrm: Revelation*, *The Left-Handed Hummingbird*, *Just War*, and *The Also People* (and yes, iconoclastic but surprisingly easy to televise classic *Human Nature*), and the artwork rose to the challenge. *Timewyrm: Genesys* sets out the series' stall: the Doctor is relegated to a ghostly profile in the top left, with the focus on Gilgamesh and the creepily erotic Ishtar (whose scanty cybernetic negligee plants the first seeds

of Virgin's controversial mature tone).

In the initial 'season' of novels (the *Timewyrm*s and *Cat's Cradles* from 1991-92), Ace features more prominently than Sylvester McCoy's Doctor, perhaps to present a Platonic Ideal *Doctor Who* detached from the cancelled series, or due to the legendary difficulties of capturing McCoy's soulful face. Elson plumbed highs and lows – for every *Legacy* there was a *Shakedown* to demonstrate he was stronger on Orion III spacecraft than Scottish character actors. Nevertheless, the covers fulfilled Darvill



Darvill-Evans' mandate, their arresting style perhaps only marred by the increasingly dated McCoy *Doctor Who* logo, whose chunkiness often obscured compositions.

When the Doctor is illustrated regularly, around 1993, he dons a crumpled cream linen suit described in *White Darkness*, sometimes augmented with waistcoat and cravat to nod to the fan-favoured Edwardian style. He also loses his question-mark pullover and gains a fedora, but due either to error or stubbornness it is invariably represented as McCoy's familiar collapsible Panama hat. Make no mistake: this get-up is as symbolic as Tom Baker's muted maroon ensemble in 1980. The somewhat louche appearance of the NA Doctor is perfectly in line with his morally dubious manipulations. Tony Masero's *Original Sin* cover wouldn't pack nearly the punch with, say, David Tennant – here we see him as Roz and Chris do, a sinister and even seedy little man who could be a murderer (an effect arguably enhanced by Masero giving him worryingly Trump-sized hands).

It is a testament to Virgin's excellence that Bernice Summerfield, Roz Forrester, and Chris Cwej have strong visual presences denied to later non-TV sidekicks like Sam Jones or Evelyn Smythe. The crop-haired Emma Thompson-in-fatigues or the frowning Xhosa space-cop linger in the mind even after faithful performances by Lisa Bowerman and Yasmin Bannerman in the Big Finish audios. Admirably, the artists resisted the obvious temptation to festoon the covers with familiar foes. Due to Terry Nation's perennial stropiness, the Doctor's arch-enemies took an unprecedented eight-year sabbatical from extermination; the only image of a Dalek in 94 books is hidden in smoke on Page 343 of *Lucifer Rising*. The Cybermen get only a *Wheel in Space* -era glove, almost obscured by the title box of *Iceberg*. Such rarity made it all the more special to see Ice Warriors, Silurians, and Sontarans, alongside new creatures like Chelonians, Betrushians, Tymewyrms, and Charrl. Ultimately, despite the visceral horror overtones, the *New Adventures* were rarely about the monsters. This simultaneously sidestepped an obvious area the print medium could never fully realise and aimed to banish the 'rubber monsters' of pop-culture. And it's remarkable how effective this was: only after this era could Paul Cornell suggest, in a 1999 *DWM* interview, that a new series should "possibly

[avoid] the monsters, as nobody in this country does rubber suits that any producer wouldn't shrink back from". It was detached professional Julie Gardner, not fans and NA authors Cornell or Russell T Davies, who didn't shrink back from rubber monsters and insisted every 2005 episode feature one.

If this artwork has a collective weakness, it is that all too few covers reflected the more playful writing: Jeff Cummins' *Conundrum* whimsically pits Ace against a cartoon-styled Dr. Nemesis in an Alpine village, *Tragedy Day* outfits an alien gangster with snap-brim hat and revolver, Mark Wilkinson's *Return of the Living Dad* shows a parody UFO abduction in a crop circle, and Bill Donohoe's *Head Games* features a malevolent Dr Who menacing Mel with an Acme laser rifle. With the novels' tonal tug-of-war between embracing the series' silliness versus gritting it up to correct perceived past failures (known in book-fan circles as the 'guns v. frocks' debate), the imagery arguably went too far in the 'guns' direction.

In spite of this, Rebecca Levene recalled in 2002 that they "looked like kids' books. They weren't kids' books and yet the shops would always rack them there even though we told them not to." Hence a new format in May 1996, letterboxed with a dark vortex and a more muted logo (the 'Doctor' no longer angled upwards, the text now transparent and reminiscent of Sid Sutton's 1980 'neon-tube' design). Levene argued this redesign "gave the artists more freedom ... without large parts of the image being obscured." Yet, while *DWM*'s description of "a series of somewhat dour and unattractive covers" was overly harsh, it is true that they were often so conceptually and literally dark it seemed like Virgin Publishing would end up with Spinal Tap's black album. By

1997, despite losing the *Doctor Who* logo entirely, artists had got to grips with the design, the likes of Jon Sullivan and Fred Gambino providing sumptuous covers for *The Room With No Doors*, *Lungharrow*, *The Dying Days*, and *So Vile A Sin*. These amply set the stage for the Bernice-only *New Adventures* of 1997 to 1999 to consistently outclass the BBC ranges in the graphics stakes.

Even without the back-cover boast of "stories too broad and too deep for the small screen", the artists' ambitions are clear. Present-day settings prefigure Russell T Davies' postcard-London (St. Paul's Cathedral in *Blood Heat*, the Tower of London in *The Dying Days*), while the past is





signposted with Sherlock Holmes (*All-Consuming Fire*), the Pyramids of Giza (*Set Piece*), or ominous swastikas (*Timewyrm: Exodus, Just War*). The futuristic vistas of *Cat's Cradle: Warhead, Transit*, and *Lucifer Rising* are cyberpunk hellscape that make Androzani Minor look like the Eye of Orion. Every NA companion dons big-shouldered space armour straight from Judge Dredd's tailor. There are no *TV Century 21*-homaging flying saucers (aside from in 1950s-set *First Frontier*), artists instead favouring *Aliens*-issue grungy militaristic hardware. Like losing the monsters, the visual aesthetic widens the scope, dirties it down, and casts off the low-budget stigma. In Peter Elson's *The Highest Science* cover, so archetypal an image it deserves the diamond logo, the point

Doctor as Paul McGann appear only nine times across 73 books is nothing short of perverse, particularly when the silly Seal of Rassilon pops up three times, skulls seven times, and anonymous alien planets 29 (for some reason Black Sheep and BBC Books thought 'round shapes with stars behind' would really sell *Doctor Who*). Add in that dreadfully spangly Pertwee logo, you have buyer-unfriendly books comprehensively out of step with mainstream publishing – Colin Baker's patchwork coat in graphic form. Amid so many nadirs I must single out Trevor Baxendale's *Coldheart* – a fine read, adorned with what looks like a still from a gynaecology textbook.

Modern *Doctor Who* art aims to capture the hectic excitement of the twenty-first century series. The post-2005 novels and Big Finish audios seem, to my eye, overstuffed. The technical talent is undeniable, but the Photoshopped heaps of Doctors and companions and Daleks and TARDISEs and actors in digital costumes and vortices and Uncle Tom Cobley lack the crispness and the thematic depth of Virgin's approach.

In a sign we have come full circle, the revived TV series surely borrowed its 2011 'Impossible Astronaut' from Andrew Skilleter's acclaimed *Timewyrm: Revelation* cover, then aimed for a 'movie poster' approach when Matt Smith

was departing, then nabbed the Peter Capaldi title sequence from a fan's YouTube video. Yet Smith forlornly carrying a prone Amy through Dalek hordes, or the silhouettes of Capaldi and Keeley Hawes selling the moribund *Time Heist* as a caper comedy, exactly embody the anonymous 'tie-in' art Peter Darvill-Evans sought to avoid. Swap a tweed jacket for a Starfleet uniform, or the ever-raised sonic screwdriver for a lightsaber to see how interchangeable our show's iconography has become. I long for that shift, unpredictable, difficult-to-draw Doctor in a cream suit, his motives as unknowable as the 'Who' in his title. Perversely, books designed to be iconoclastic and controversial now evoke as much nostalgia as fuzzy black-and-white videos – a time when *Doctor Who*'s lost popular sheen freed it to be more idiosyncratic and ambitious.

is neither the quarry nor the monsters; it is the number of Chelonians, the panoramic moonscape, the imposing gunship in the distance. Yet it's still deeply, joyously silly: the Chelonians are, after all, armoured turtles. This image shows how at their best the *New Adventures* put the Doctor amid the 1990s SF landscape while retaining *Doctor Who*'s essence. The BBC wouldn't let him, but readers all knew this Doctor could take on the decade's rivals in spades.

Just as it was a tragedy (day?) for *Doctor Who* storytelling when the BBC withdrew their licence and began their dreary ranges, so the texture and detail of these covers gave way to digital eyesores from Black Sheep (no individual artist was credited, perhaps due to embarrassment). In 1997, the future of *Doctor Who* was if anything bleaker than in 1991, so perhaps the BBC's timidity arose from bafflement. But to have as photogenic a

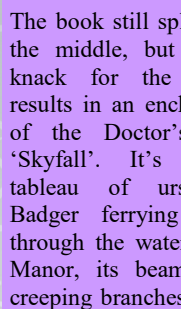
## Five Other Excellent New Adventures Covers

***Strange England* (1994) by Simon Messingham (cover by Paul Campbell)**



A splendidly Gothic illustration. In a clock-festooned Victorian parlour, the Doctor retreats from a steampunk nightmare (steam literally billowing from its shoulder) with limbs of rusty steel, the long talons of Nosferatu, and stacked faces (one of which appears to be the Doctor's own).

***Lungbarrow* (1997) by Marc Platt (cover by Fred Gambino)**



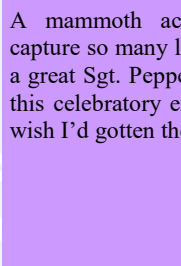
The book still splits fans down the middle, but Marc Platt's knack for the otherworldly results in an enchanting vision of the Doctor's Gallifreyan 'Skyfall'. It's a Styx-like tableau of ursine retainer Badger ferrying the Doctor through the water-logged Who Manor, its beams lined with creeping branches and its walls lined with creepy portraits. It would have been nice if one of them was that 1930s *Spotlight* photo of William Hartnell Platt wanted in the TV story, but otherwise exquisite.

***The Also People* (1995) by Ben Aaronovitch (cover by Tony Masero)**



The Doctor enjoys a moment's peace while floating in the People's Dyson Sphere, anticipating the TV Movie's obsession with tea and *The Curse of Fatal Death*'s Sofa of Reasonable Comfort in the process. Masero observed that the cover "nicely encapsulate[s] the mixture of madly bizarre and homespun avuncularity that was the foundation of the Doctor Who concept".

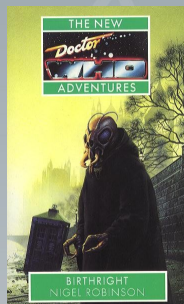
***Happy Endings* (1996) by Paul Cornell (cover by Paul Campbell)**



A mammoth achievement to capture so many likenesses, and a great Sgt. Pepper's tribute for this celebratory extravaganza. I wish I'd gotten the poster!



**Birthright (1993)** by Nigel Robinson (cover by Peter Elson)



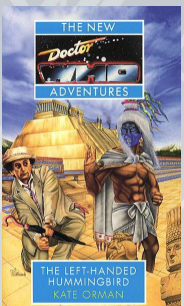
This image sums up everything great about the *New Adventures* covers. The horror trappings, the contrast between the uncanny and the mundane (the Charrl wearing a monk's habit), the mournful details of yellow-skied Edwardian London and the deactivated TARDIS

drooping on the banks of the Thames. It's a haunting image, all the more so for its lack of melodrama.

And for contrast ...

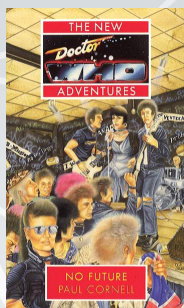
### Five Less Excellent New Adventures Covers

**The Left-Handed Hummingbird (1993)** by Kate Orman (cover by Pete Wallbank)

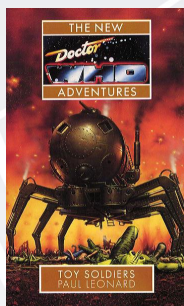


The Aztec god Huitzilin is perfect, but Sylvester McCoy is referenced from a *Paradise Towers* photo-call and looks like he's riding his umbrella like a giddy-up horse toy. He had dropped acid earlier, so maybe he was.

**No Future (1993)** by Paul Cornell (cover by Pete Wallbank)



Called out by Craig Hinton in *DWM* as "the worst New Adventures cover ever". Definitely period-appropriate, but the cigarette-stain palette and Ace's silly 'to-camera' mugging scream 1970s in the wrong way.



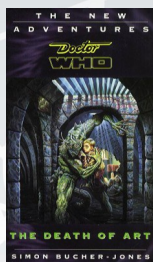
**Toy Soldiers (1995)** by Paul Leonard (cover by Peter Elson)

The backside of a large oil-belching war machine, with alien and human bodies strewn below. Suitably grim, but hard on the eyes even aside from the dominant orange / brown

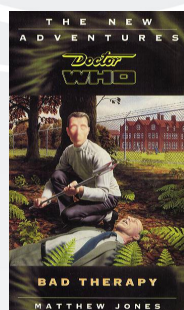
colour-scheme.



**The Death of Art (1996)** by Simon Bucher-Jones (cover by Jon Sullivan)



A cover so dark it's difficult to see, which is a shame as close inspection and eye-strain reveals witty details like a Rue Morgue street sign.



**Bad Therapy (1996)** by Matt Jones (cover by Mark Salwowski)

A faceless man crouches over a dead body. The scene is a little dull and compares poorly with the 'weird stuff happening with dead bodies' on the *Damaged Goods* cover just two months earlier.

### Artists' Websites

**Jeff Cummins Artist** ([jeffcummins.wixsite.com](http://jeffcummins.wixsite.com)): Includes a treasure trove of sketches – even his unused *Christmas on a Rational Planet* cover.

**Peter Elson: Science Fiction Illustrator** ([www.peterelson.co.uk/](http://www.peterelson.co.uk/)): Featuring a wealth of images from Elson's very distinguished career.

**Tony Masero Illustration** ([www.tonymasero.co.uk](http://www.tonymasero.co.uk))

**Andrew Skilleter** ([www.andrewskilleter.com](http://www.andrewskilleter.com))

**Pete Wallbank** ([www.petewallbankart.com](http://www.petewallbankart.com)) I singled out two of Wallbank's less successful works, but this website has pages of excellent images, going right up to date with strong likenesses of Peter Capaldi and Jodie Whittaker.

| Hamish Crawford



# GRANT BULL

# WHOTOPIA

I love books.

I don't think I could function without books in my life. I carry at least two with me in my travels to and from work, I have an inordinate amount stacked in various boxes around the house, and my garage is the most disorganised library in the world.

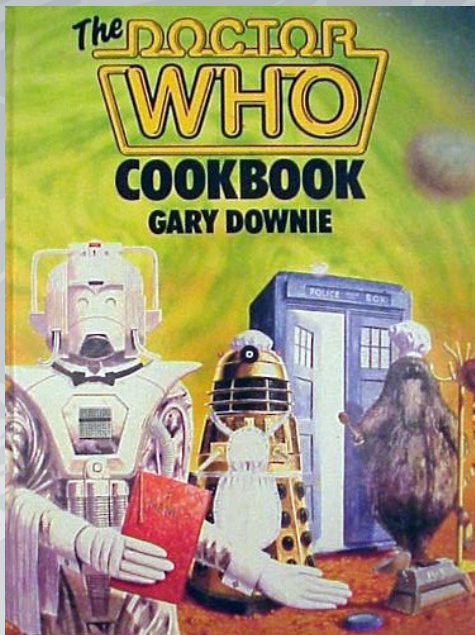
I've mentioned before that my first foray into *Doctor Who* books ended in tears. Big wet, childish tears. It was at a book fair visiting my primary school where I'd spotted a large *Doctor Who* book crammed full of Doctors, companions and enemies that I had never seen before. However, when it came to the buying section of the event I was told no by my Mum. She hadn't understood the *Who* thing and my wanting to buy a book on a show I hadn't seen much of didn't seem like good value for money. I guess that event plays a large part in me wanting to now collect every *Doctor Who*-related piece of literature to be published.

So with this issue of **Whotopia** being a celebration of books I decided to dig out a classic to revisit. Which one, though? One of those detailed reference books from the bods at Telos Publishing? Maybe a *New Adventure* or even an old annual? I'd like to say there was more deliberation, that I went through an elimination process worthy of the greatest selection committee in the world. But I didn't. None was necessary. I already had a winner in mind...

*The Doctor Who Cookbook* of 1985.

This wonder is presented to us by the good folks at Target Books. Yes, the team who brought us all of those wonderful novelisations also gave us this slice of delight. Some of you may recognise the name of the author, Gary Downie. For those who aren't aware, he was a production manager on *Doctor Who* and the partner of John Nathan-Turner. For those cruelly thinking that's the only reason this book was published and his name adorns the cover, then shame on you! By the way, I totally agree.

Let's start at the beginning: the cover, and what a cover it is for all kinds of reasons – one which



I'll let you decide on for yourself! So, we have in the foreground a Cyberman complete with bowtie and a menu tucked under his arm waiting to seat you and take your order. If that isn't inviting enough, we have a Dalek in a pinny waiting to whisk up a storm in the kitchen. Plus a Yeti equipped with a spoon and chef's hat, and the TARDIS with its doors open, perhaps an indication dinner will be served in the console room. Oh, and K9 is present too... a dog's dinner perhaps being the suggestion?!

So what is this book really all about? Well, Gary Downie has collected recipes from the stars associated with *Doctor Who*, some are their own ideas, some their favourite dishes, and each attempt is appropriately named after actors, characters and other elements of the show. On that note, there are some wonderfully dodgy recipe names, and if you are as immature as me then get ready to snigger: Fielding's Ocker Balls, Sil's Slimy Slurp, Todd in the Hole and Davros Dalek Dip! If I were to see any of these on a menu in a restaurant, I would be ordering them just to see the poor waiter's or waitress' face turn red as they scribbled it down and hurried away.

Like this book, as a parent I have tried to use

my kids' interests or favourite shows to get them to eat, but I must say it has had little effect, or if anything the opposite effect. They didn't go much on 'Cream of Pikachu Soup' or 'My Little Pony Steaks' and neither did my wife when the good food she had cooked went in the bin whilst the little ones faces turned green.

Scattered amongst the pages are some illustrations by Gail Bennett which are both welcome and amusing. Then there are the photos of the stars preparing or eating the meals, and I feel it fair to warn you now that the image of director Fiona Cumming shovelling cake into her mouth is one of the scariest *Doctor Who* monsters I haven't seen on television. As much as I want to replace this mental picture with the one of Nicola Bryant on the adjacent page chopping a lemon in the most lemony of jumpsuits my brain will not allow it. I tell you this in the hope that this is one of those weird mindlock things that will release me from its grip once mentioned aloud and move onto another victim... I am so sorry.

If anything this book has to be seen to be believed; it's goofy and bloody good fun to read with mates and a couple of drinks, but I worry that upon its release it was a serious thing. Did the BBC peeps seriously see this book rivalling Delia in the charts or indeed the kitchens of the masses? One recipe for me, though, makes this book and its existence all worthwhile, the genius of 'Kipper of Traken'. Brilliant.

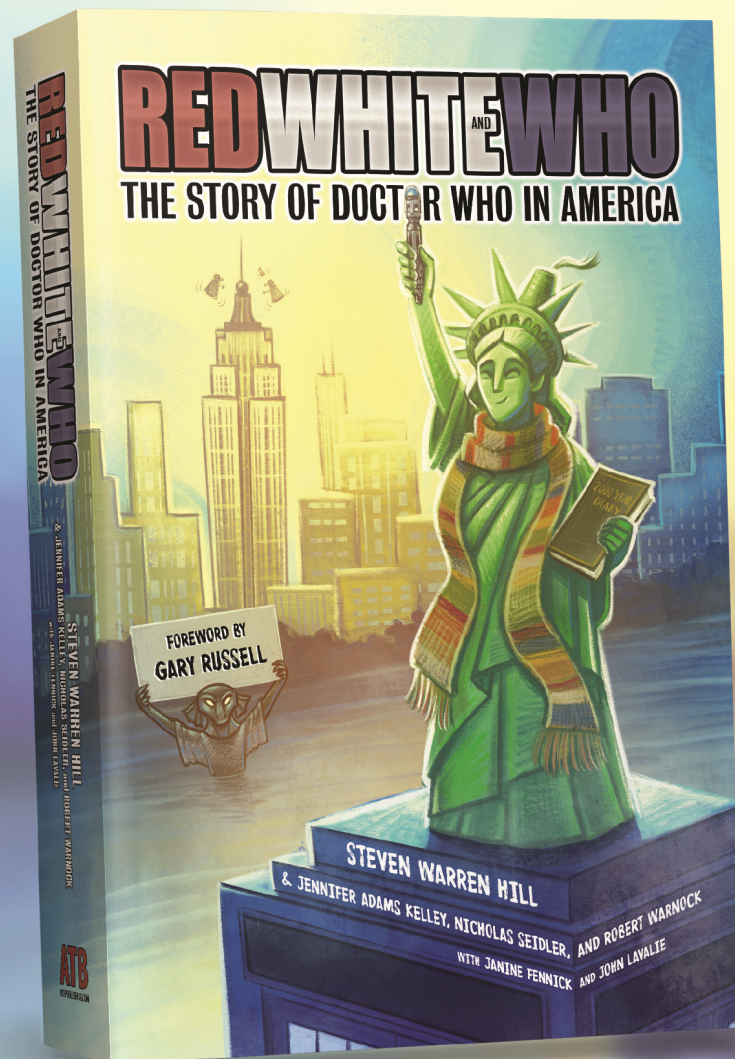
Seriously, check this book out. You won't be disappointed no matter which way you look at it...

*Note to Editors: Any chance I could be reimbursed the cost of this book? The bloke in the shop was very quick to get my money in the till and didn't provide a receipt. In fact, everyday I have gone past since, he turns the sign on the door to 'Closed'. I'm getting a bit paranoid now... Oh and please don't forgot to cut this from the printed version. Ta, G.*

| Grant Bull



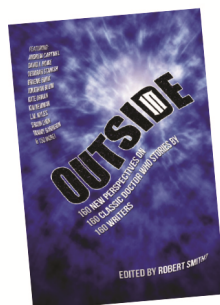
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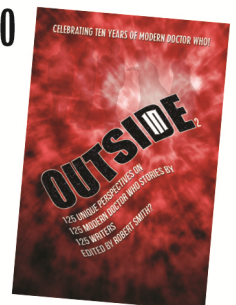


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# SCRIPT DOCTOR

## THE INSIDE STORY OF DOCTOR WHO 1986-89

When I pick up a biography and somewhere beneath the book title is the caveat “Unauthorised and Unofficial” I instantly get that added sense of curiosity. Of course, this sort of rider helps to avoid unnecessary legal entanglements, but there’s something else at work here, a feeling that what’s printed within the unassuming paper frame might have an edge to it. An authenticity, if you will, unlikely to make an appearance in more official works.

This is the type of rider you’ll find unobtrusively positioned in black framing at the bottom of the cover page of Andrew Cartmel’s 2005 book the *Script Doctor: The Inside Story of Doctor Who 1986-89*. A mix of time period, Cartmel’s unique perspective as an up-and-coming writer taking on the demanding job of script editor, and the uncensored nature of his memoir, make for the perfect page turner.

Cartmel’s story is well served by his skills as an evocative writer and a mindful observer – an ideal combination where memoir writing is concerned. And it’s a memoir topic which utterly captivates me. I’ve always found the role of script editor on the original series fascinating, and have long held the view that this position has the potential – given a sympathetic producer – to really shape the series. I don’t think it’s a coincidence that when *Doctor Who* had highly creative professionals in this post it took to the skies. Nothing I read in Cartmel’s memoir leads me to think otherwise.

Told script by script in chronological order, *Script Doctor* is packed with insightful observations on everything from intransigent writers, to the threat of a wonderful script being turned into a dog’s dinner by the lighting department. Interspaced with some delightfully sharp metaphors and similes, the reader is led from the debris-strewn office of the recently-quit former script editor Eric Saward to the highs of Cartmel’s stable of writing talent coming through in the works of Stephen Wyatt, Ian Briggs, Ben Aaronovitch and Marc Platt. Along the way, we find out how Pip and Jane Baker responded to Cartmel’s line-cutting, and

catch glimpses of the realism proffered by John Nathan Turner in a post-hiatus, post-Saward, post-Sixth Doctor world, shorn of the securities *Doctor Who* had basked in just a few years earlier.

Speaking of a former script editor, if you’ve read Eric Saward’s interview in *Starburst Magazine*, circa 1986, then be warned. Cartmel’s account is a country mile away in tone and style. It’s a well-

***“Cartmel’s unique perspective... and the uncensored nature of his memoir, make for the perfect page turner.”***

fermented tale derived from his diaries of the time, not a tell-all interview, which is another sort of literary experience altogether.

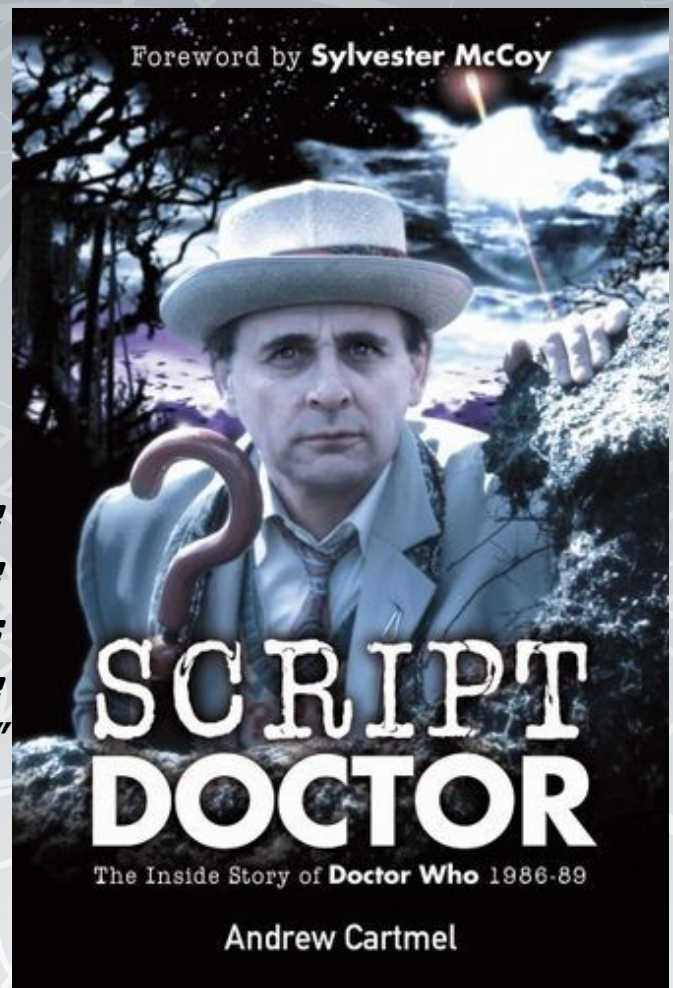
My only criticism lies in the balance of Cartmel’s memories. Rightly so there are two chapters apiece on *Time and the Rani* (Cartmel’s first script in post) and *Remembrance of the Daleks* (the script where the Cartmel Masterplan starts to unfold). A decent twenty-odd page focus on *Paradise Towers*, Cartmel’s first commissioned script as script editor, is also well chosen, and stands out for its near minute-by-minute commentary on events, partying with Kangs included. But come Season Twenty-Six and the page count per story has shrunk, with less than ten pages apiece for *The Curse of Fenric*, *Ghost Light* and *Survival*, and just a little over ten for *Battlefield*. This seems like a missed opportunity. Season Twenty-Six is Cartmel at his most effective, regardless of badly designed

inter-dimensional knights. I for one would have loved to read more about it.

The real value of this book, however, rests in the way Cartmel is able to fine-tune his recollections to just the right side of personal. Arguments are presented in as even a way as possible, given we’ve only Cartmel’s point of view to go on. Likewise there’s no feeling of arrogance or ego here. It all feels very balanced in this sense, which is no small feat where raking up the past is concerned.

I highly recommend it.

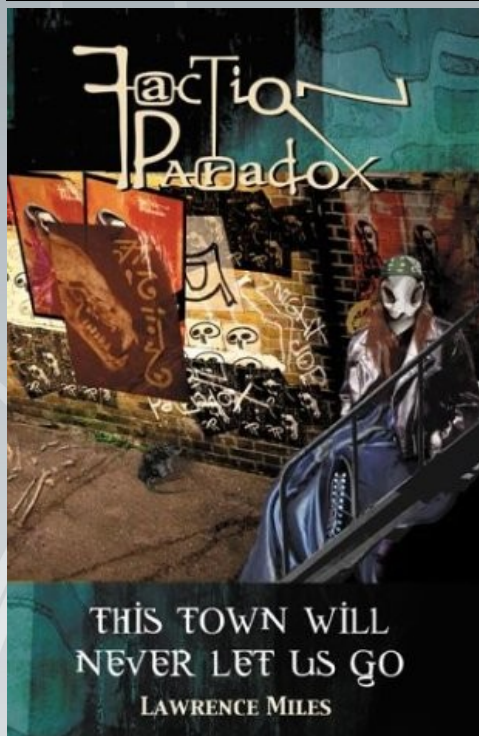
| Jez Strickley





# THIS TOWN WILL NEVER LET US GO

## LAWRENCE MILES



Nearly a decade ago now, I attended a panel at the Chicago TARDIS convention on the topic of the various novel ranges of the wilderness years. On the panel were convention guests who had contributed to those books including Jonathan Blum, Paul Cornell, Kate Orman, and Gary Russell. Perhaps it was inevitable that the topic of Lawrence Miles, that looming but an immensely controversial author of the era, came up as the proverbial “elephant in the room”. Despite Miles attacking them all in interviews earlier in the decade, all four had great things to say about his work and it was Cornell who said that Miles, “should have been the next great British science fiction writer”. In reading his 2003 *Faction Paradox* novel *This Town Will Never Let Us Go*, Miles’ last published novel (which I bought at the same convention six years later), I can’t help but feel he was right in that assessment.

Technically, *This Town Will Never Let Us Go* was meant to be the opening standalone novel in a series of novels from US-based publisher Mad Norwegian Press. Considering that, it feels like an odd book indeed. The titular faction hardly features in the novel at all, mainly through little references here and there. The iconography of masks and rituals is present and it’s safe to say that the Faction are lurking in the novel, almost like the Illuminati or various nebulous nefarious

entities of modern conspiracy theories. Yet they seem less than fully formed, which is odd given how much Miles had already done with them. Indeed, all the things one would have expected from Miles previous set-up in *Doctor Who* novels like *Alien Bodies* (1997) barely comes into play at all, though readers of that novel will recognize at least one character in the middle part of it. On the surface at least, this seems quite a strange way to kick-off a separate *Faction Paradox* spin-off series to say the least.

Or at least one might very well think that. Instead of what the reader was likely expecting, Miles being Miles instead spends 281 pages following a trio of characters across six hours one morning in a city that seems a lot like London. Through them, Miles presents the reader with a human eye view of that conflict central to the *Faction* canon known simply as The War. Across these hours we meet Inangela, a Goth girl living in a van determined to join the ranks of the Faction by engaging in a ritual across the titular town. Then there’s Valentine, an ambulance driver who has decided to make his own way into The War. Last but not least is Tiffany, a Latina pop singer of the Britney Spears variety who goes on a journey of self-discovery right into the heart of modern media. These three apparently disconnected protagonists eventually converge in the plot’s last couple of hours but that isn’t what’s most surprising about the novel.

That would be the fact that Miles does what all great science fiction does. He takes this human eye view of The War and engages in an almighty critique of British society and Western culture in the aftermath of 9/11. The War becomes a metaphor for the War on Terror and Valentine’s subplot becomes an all too familiar story of radicalization that wouldn’t be out of place in headlines fifteen plus years after the novel was first published. Miles is also keen to take shots at the media, advertising, and pop culture in general as he finds symbolism and banality side by side in places. Despite it being “the most 2003 book imaginable” (to paraphrase and indeed correct something Miles said in the last interview I’m aware of that he did on the Resonance FM show *Reality Check* in 2013), it’s also a remarkably prescient book as he discusses the spread of information and ideas, kneejerk reactions, and cults of personality around celebrities that doesn’t feel at all out of place in the age of Twitter and social media. What’s remarkable is that Miles does all that in what is really a novel meant to be aimed at a niche within a niche (that is *Doctor Who* fans who not only read his previous BBC

novels but also wanted more of *Faction Paradox* in print) and tells a compelling story along the way.

It’s compelling in large part because of how Miles chooses to tell his story. The novel unfolds minute by minute, hour by hour in this unnamed town that may or may not be some version of London. The novel is full of asides worthy of Douglas Adams and an almost obsessive eye towards the mythological dimensions underpinning ordinary things that would not be out of place in one of Neil Gaiman’s novels from *Neverwhere* to *American Gods*. Indeed, reading this made me understand some of Miles’ animosity towards Gaiman that he has expressed in postings on his blog. They’re both British writers (though Gaiman spends a lot of time in the US these days) who deal in similar territories at times. Miles is what Gaiman (and perhaps even the aforementioned late Mr. Adams) would be if they were cynical to the extreme. The cynicism and the at times borderline pretentious literary style (along with the small print of the physical edition I read) makes reading the novel difficult at times. It’s a novel overflowing with ideas and insights (as painful and difficult to swallow as they are at times) but well worth making it through.

Perhaps the biggest problem the novel has is that it is, ultimately, meant to be a *Doctor Who* spin-off novel. It’s the fact that it is aimed at the aforementioned niche within a niche that made its audience so small. *This Town Will Never Let Us Go* is a remarkable, breathtaking, even uncomfortably-getting-under-your-skin piece of work. It should have been the start of something new, maybe a way of bringing *Faction Paradox* and its creator to a wider audience.

Instead, it’s a footnote. One of many *Doctor Who* spin-off novels out there at the moment. Miles said in the aforementioned 2013 podcast interview that he has all but given up writing at this point and indeed this novel is his latest published novel as of writing this in early 2018. All of which makes me sad because *This Town Will Never Let Us Go* ought to be screamed about from the rooftops and Miles ought to be winning awards for his work. Instead one is all but out of print (though still at writing obtainable at reasonable prices) and the other has given up writing.

Neither of which feels right.

| Matthew Kresal



# THREE FOR TWELVE

## THREE NEW SERIES NOVELS REVIEWED



The once relentless publishing schedule of BBC Books has long since abated to the occasional special or short set of novels. The most recent bundle of New Series Adventures, as they're often referred, came out back in April 2017, to little fanfare. Which is rather a shame, because these three novels are very enjoyable *Doctor Who* tales.

The stories use the classic trio of settings so beloved by many a season of modern *Who*: past, present, future. One historical adventure, one contemporary fantasy, and one futuristic bit of sci-fi. Seemingly set first from the Doctor and Bill's point of view is the futuristic adventure, *Diamond Dogs*, by author / model-maker / effects artist Mike Tucker. Given that much of Tucker's career involves him making ships and stations hanging in space, you can't blame him for making the most of the prose

format and setting a story in an environment that would be almost impossible to reproduce on screen without a truly gigantic budget.

*Diamond Dogs* takes place on a mining station, suspended in the atmosphere of Saturn. The Earth Empire has struck up an agreement with an alien race called the Cancri to use their gravitational technology. In return, the Cancri get a cut of the diamonds that rain down from the clouds of Saturn, that the Empire uses to maintain its huge economy. It's a remarkable and majestic setting, which Tucker describes beautifully, particularly through the eyes of the novel's main fifty-first century protagonist, the practical but idealistic Captain Laura Palmer (presumably Tucker is a *Twin Peaks* fan as well as a Bowie fan). The sheer beauty of Saturn and its rings is contrasted with the incredible danger of the crushing pressure of its toxic atmosphere. It's a hugely dangerous environment, exactly the sort of place you don't want to be when there are not only space pirates to deal with, but an unknown alien life form from deep

within the gas giant's atmosphere. Palmer is an interesting and likeable character, pragmatic but captivated by the beauty of the universe. Paired off with the Doctor for a time, she makes a fine temporary companion.

Tucker captures the early relationship between the Doctor and Bill well, with his portrayal of the Twelfth Doctor revelling in how crabby and difficult he is to everyone else. They're part of a broad group of characters from pernicious company men to salt-of-the-solar-system engineers, making for a bustling futuristic industrial setting that's just made to become a base-under-siege. Tucker also spares no opportunity to make reference to previous episodes,

from the most recent adventures of the Twelfth Doctor and Bill to the long-lost future of the 1970s. It all makes for a fun and exciting space adventure in the classic tradition of *Doctor Who*.

Moving back in time we have *The Shining Man* by Cavan Scott, a truly great children's novel and fairytale. That's not to say that it is childish, or twee, or lacking impact. This is a fairytale in the horrific true sense of the term. The Shining Men are an urban legend, bogeymen supposedly stalking Lancashire terrorising people at night. It's a vision of growing panic and terror that owes more than a little to the Slenderman meme that has penetrated various parts of pop culture. Scott links the monster back to boggarts, noting that such creatures are the original bogeymen of our culture and the source of so many horror stories. As the Doctor and Bill investigate, they delve further into the realm of the Fairies – not the bowdlerised, Disneyfied versions we know





While focusing on two children – Noah and Masie, whose mother goes missing during the Shining Men scare – might put off some older readers, this is an excellently written children's adventure that never pulls its punches. Childhood is a scary time, and Scott doesn't forget that, when we're truly frightened, we're essentially back to being children, with all the feelings of powerlessness that entails. Two main adult characters join the Doctor and Bill during the events. First is vlogger Cryptogal-UK, aka Charlotte, a tomboyish monster enthusiast who could easily be played by *The Fan Show's* Christel Dee. The bulk of the Doctor's story, though, involves local police officer Jane Schofield, a strong-willed and well-rounded character who provides the reader's identification figure for much of the story. Scott gets in as many knowing references to previous *Who* adventures as Tucker, but doesn't stop at the TV series, instead taking on everything from *Torchwood* to Iris Wildthyme, but it never oversteps the mark to become invasive. Recommended for nine-year-olds who enjoy being scared.

Back in time we go again, to seventeenth-century Edinburgh for *Plague City* by the reliably excellent Jonathan Morris. Of the three novels, this is the strongest, a historical horror story with plenty of intrigue. Set a little later in the tenth season, *Plague City* sees the Doctor and Bill joined by Nardole as they explore the Scottish city as it's beset by the one of the worst outbreaks of plague in British history. A phantom plague doctor is haunting the town, taking the touch of death wherever he goes (plague doctors are so visually terrifying, it's surprising that they've never turned up in the TV series). Not only that, but ghosts are beginning to appear in the streets, the recently dead demanding to be let back into their homes to see their terrified families. There's a natural

disaster looming on the horizon and men are being conscripted to serve as guards to keep the remaining population settled.

A pretty grim setting for a *Doctor Who* story, but one that Morris brings to life with panache. With the help of some friends as dialect coaches, he gives the locals believable dialogue, although I don't know how well it would read to an actual Scot. There's a lovely bit where Nardole sulkily asks why he isn't allowed to be Scottish like the Doctor. The interplay between the regulars is spot on, and as with the previous two novels, there is a strong female secondary character who temporarily joins the team. In this instance it's Annabelle Rae, the forthright but secretive physician of the town, who is continuing in her father's footsteps and trying to help the many sufferers of the plague.

While there is some retreading of the "You can't change history – not one line!" school of thought, it's balanced by a more compassionate take on the Doctor. The Twelfth Doctor, after all, shares his face with someone he once saved from a historical tragedy, and here he is at once respectful of the preservation of history and unable to stand by and simply let people die. It's a fine balance, managed well. Naturally there is a sci-fi explanation for the ghosts, and the story becomes quite packed with disparate elements as it goes on, but it never gets out of hand or feels overly complex. Fundamentally a story about grief and how important it is to being human, it is ultimately quite uplifting and ends with one of the most Capaldi-esque moments imaginable. Something of a return to the more mature *Doctor Who* novels of earlier years, *Plague City* is a fine adventure.

| Dan Tessier



**"...ghosts are beginning to appear in the streets, the recently dead demanding to be let back into their homes to see their terrified families."**





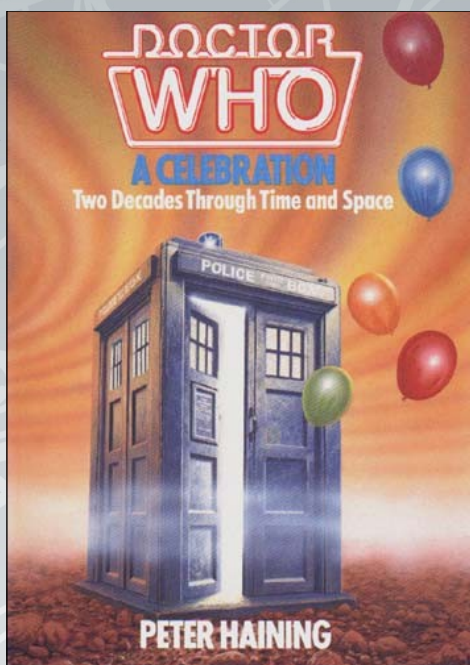
*In memory of Whotopia's long-standing contributor Gary Phillips, this new column picks up from where 'Dalek's Advocate' left off, with a serious – and sometimes not so serious – rethink of those characters and stories which have attracted opprobrium. And, as the column title suggests, even in the downright awful there are nuggets of goodness to be found.*

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In its previous incarnation (Ed: 'Dalek's Advocate') this column had several guest columnists: Jon Arnold, Margaret Brown, Grant Bull, Thomas Cookson, Bob Furnell, Thomas Spsychalski, Jez Strickley. Some wrote for the column once, others twice, and one managed it three times. Not a bad run, you might say. Well, this is my fifth shot at 'The Curate's Egg'. That's right, number five. In fact, no one else has had a byline for this column since it was launched in **Whotopia 28** in tribute to the much missed Gary Phillips. This means I own this column. When, then, I asked Bob and Jez if I could write about a topic out of left field, they heartily agreed. After all, they could hardly refuse the writer who'd defended rubbery monsters, a recently-departed showrunner, an unloved cactus villain adventure, and a controversial epic-length story. They owed me, and this column is me calling in the debt. The result is this rather bookish piece: a humble tribute to a rarely-considered *Doctor Who* author and historian. I'm talking about the late, great Peter Haining.

I'm going to tell you about how, in the mid-1980s, this author single-handedly breathed life into a genre of writing which had come along in fits and starts since the early 1970s. The result is a series of reference texts which sketch the mood and tone of the last years of the original series, all the way from the heady days of the 1983 twentieth anniversary celebrations, to the BBC's quiet abandonment of the series in 1989.

Let's start with some of the criticisms. Always best to get any panic out of the way at the start.



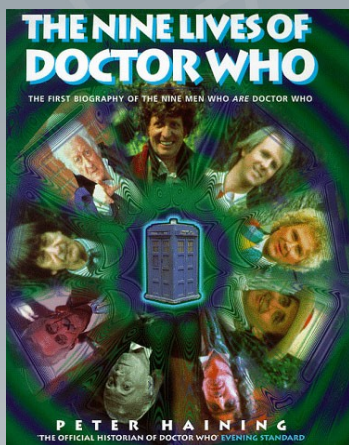
**"Haining wasn't part of the Doctor Who writing family... How could his books ever hope to be anything other than display works when he wasn't a paid-up member of fandom or a privileged insider?"**

First off, Haining's *Doctor Who* reference books have been labelled coffee table efforts, not really deserving the status of more serious historical pieces. It's true that they tend to be quite imposing tomes, grand and glossy, brimming with color photos and artists' impressions. Ideal display shelf books, you might say, but not necessarily high-level reference material. On that point it's also true that they're not mighty analytical giants, either. That said, if you're only contemporary go-to for that sort of thing is *The Unfolding Text*, I'd say Haining was wise to keep his thoughts to the less profound. Then there's the occasional factual blip, too, which sadly doesn't help. However trivial such mis-steps maybe, they only reinforce the point that Haining wasn't laser-guided in his research, a significant drawback where his audience was concerned – an audience never less than laser-guided in its obsessive attempts to systematize and scrutinize the series.

My next concerns are more speculative than anything else. This is my opening anxiety: Haining wasn't part of the *Doctor Who* writing family. By this I mean he wasn't involved in making the series in some form or other. He wasn't a behind-the-scenes guru or an insider in the traditional sense. Neither was he an established fan, organizing fandom events and producing fanzines. So, not one of us. He was an outsider looking onto things from some sort of quasi-neutral point of view. How could his books ever hope to be anything other than display works when he wasn't a paid-up member of fandom or a privileged insider?

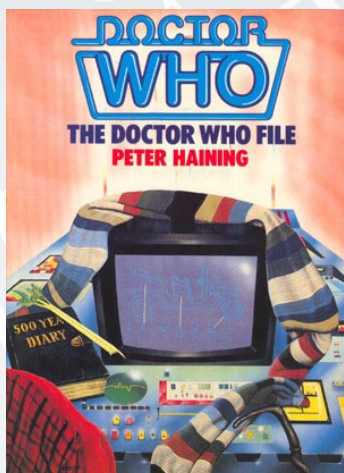
Here's another anxious speculation for you. It's called association. It happens when you get caught up in an event and marked by its fallout. Haining's reference works were in the wrong place at the wrong time. His writings kick-off as the series' popularity is peaking. Peter Davison's portrayal of the Doctor is well-received by the casual viewer, Season Nineteen has awesome ratings, and word is out of an anniversary special in the making. Haining's first book, *Doctor Who: A Celebration: Two Decades Through Time and Space* (1983), rides the celebratory wave that engulfs the





in a limited edition leatherbound version, too (I've got a copy, too. It's fantastic!). But then the wheels come off in early 1985 as the series is 'rested'. At this point something odd happens. Haining's continuing efforts to praise the programme inversely map the show's steady decline for the remainder of the decade. His *The Doctor Who File* (1986), *Doctor Who: Time Travellers' Guide* (1987), and finally *Doctor Who: 25 Glorious Years* (1988) trumpet a series which may still be a writer's and reader's treasure, but which has lost its lustre with television viewers. Maybe Haining gets tied to this downturn. Maybe being the anchor reference author in the second half of the 1980s links him and his books to an uneasy period in the programme's history. Likewise, perhaps it's just too easy to juxtapose these darkening years with the revival of *Doctor Who* in print in the 1990s. The reference works of authors like David J. Howe, Mark Stammers and Stephen James Walker, take things to another level. Haining's books suddenly look like triumphs of style over substance. Once the glossy sheen wears off the covers, and the pictures begin to fade, victory becomes hollow.

None of the above are hanging offences, but they might begin to point toward why Peter Haining's *Doctor Who* reference books don't tend to get the recognition they deserve. Which is wrong. So very, very wrong.



By the time Haining got typing, probably around 1982, there had been some sporadic growth in *Doctor Who* reference texts. A decade earlier Terrance

Dicks' and Malcolm Hulkes' *The Making of Doctor Who* (1972) offered fans a fascinating glimpse of the behind-the-scenes world of series production. The advent of the DWAS' monthly newsletter *The Celestial Toyroom* in 1976 and *Doctor Who Weekly* in 1979, plus the growing range of Target novelizations, showed there was an increasing *Doctor Who* readership. In 1981 Jean-Marc Lofficier tapped into this potential with his two-volume *The Doctor Who Programme Guide*, the beginning of a sequence of synopsis-driven works which fans would devour with glee, not to mention becoming the go-to continuity guide for producer John Nathan-Turner. Haining's books neatly slot into this timeline. Years of build-up, catalyzed by anniversary fever, at last saw the release of a dedicated series of reference guides, edited or authored by Haining. He is the icebreaker and the flagbearer in one.

Others followed. Jeremy Bentham's *Doctor Who: The Early Years* (1986) and David

**"His neutrality as an outsider of sorts is to his advantage. He has no axe to grind. His identity isn't tied up in the stories he's telling us."**

Banks' *The Cybermen* (1990) each reflected the insider-author, perhaps further emphasizing Haining as the professional reference writer. Yet this is Haining's great strength. His books are windows onto the programme's past, clean and crisp in their execution. Yes, they're celebratory, but in this sense they are as much historical artefacts in themselves as the programme they seek to detail. In Haining we have a first-rate historical preservationist. His efforts – and I'm thinking in particular of the *The Key to Time: A Year by Year Record* – etch a line of development in the series which is a joy to discover. His neutrality as an outsider of sorts is to his advantage. He has no axe to grind. His identity isn't tied up in the stories he's telling us. There's an authenticity, a care if you like, in what he describes, which is largely free of misinterpretation. Haining is first and foremost an author tasked with peeling back the layers of time to see what lies beneath. Period.

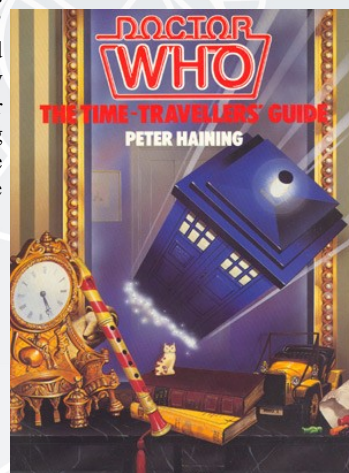
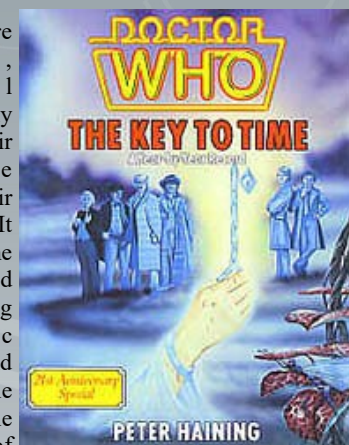
As for the coffee table label, I can think of a few more recent works that'll end up propping up a shelf or balancing a desktop before any of Haining's books are reduced to that status.

These are colorful, gladful efforts. Why should their appearance reduce their compass? It reminds me of how good-looking public figures tend to struggle against the stereotype of being just a pretty face. Haining's books are trophies of presentation, artworks in and of themselves. But don't judge them by their covers alone. There's much more happening beneath the surface, and that's where we find Haining's thread.

Organising the past into some sort of coherent form is what Haining's reference works are all about. They might seem just a little too nostalgic when we look at them today, and they were certainly nostalgic for their time, too. But that's where they're so valuable to us. In the mid-1980s, after more than twenty years of broadcasting, *Doctor Who* had such a weight of history and continuity behind it that it was about time someone started to systematically arrange the details into an historical reading. Haining's guides, between 1983 and 1988, set out a reference journey which inspires later efforts. Subsequent books maybe more sophisticated in content, less prone to error, and more carefully refined, but their starting point lies in the context established by Haining.

The advent of the TV Movie in 1996 saw Haining produce one more reference guide in the form of *The Nine Lives of Doctor Who* (1999). Sadly, that's where our story comes to a finish. Peter Haining, a hugely prolific author, died on 19 November 2007 at the age of 67. We've long celebrated inspirational figures from across the series' history, and it's surely time Peter Haining received the same recognition.

Thank you, Mr. Haining.

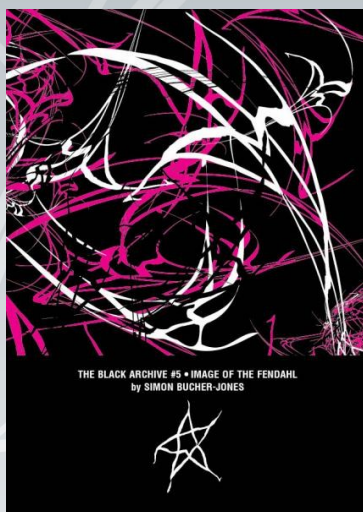






**Author Andrew Screen continues his look at the Black Archives collection of books.**

**Black Archives #5  
Image of the Fendahl  
By Simon Bucher-Jones**



Like the author of this *Black Archive* volume *Image of the Fendahl* is a personal favourite of mine, possibly due to the mix of gothic horror, Nigel Kneale and Lovecraftian themes.

The book starts by placing the story in context of the series' history and the wider landscapes of television and horror in the 1970s. This section also includes a brief overview of the influence of clean-up TV campaigner Mary Whitehouse which led the series to curtail some of its horror elements. The second chapter concentrates on the subject of gothic horror and defines what it is, how it has evolved over the years, and how filtered through the lens of Hammer horror films. This enables Bucher-Jones to unearth direct influences on *Fendahl* in the form

of *The Stone Tape* and *Quatermass and the Pit*, both from the pen of Nigel Kneale. The Amicus horror film *The Skull* also shares several common elements with *Fendahl* and these are also investigated.

Chapter three establishes links between *Fendahl* and the real-life science of palaeoarchaeology with a lengthy detour discussing how evolution functions within the format of *Doctor Who*. The chapter ends with the author trying to define just what the "image" in the story title actually is, something I had never actually considered before now.

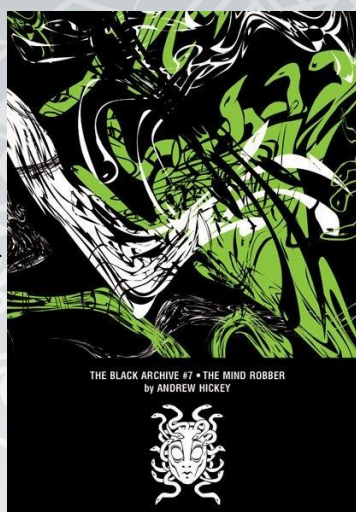
Whilst a lot of scientific areas are covered in the book it never gets bogged down with too much explanation. Instead, the tone of the book is didactic, but in a light and easy style. This style is continued with the next chapter, *The Post-Gothic and The Cosmos*, which not only examines the work of H P Lovecraft (and how this can be linked to the story being analysed) but also details the thorny question of there once being a fifth planet in close orbit around the Sun. Sections deal with both the scientific theories around the possibility and how it has been depicted in literature.

Chapter Five – *The Good and the Bad* starts with a countdown of ten flaws in the story balanced with a further six positives. The book could comfortably end here, but there are a couple of interesting appendixes at the end which act as a fine coda for the main course of the book. After *Image of the Fendahl* summarises appearances of the Fendahl in the wider worlds of books and audios whilst the second appendix offers a fan

theory on how this story and future Baker era adventure *Underworld* may be connected.

Simon Bucher Jones ends the book with a thank you to all the readers. No Simon, thank you for writing a sterling analysis.

**Black Archives #7  
The Mind Robber  
By Andrew Hickey**



This range of critical appreciations of individual *Doctor Who* adventures has been a little uneven in quality, but even the lesser releases have something unique to say and this latest addition continues this tradition. *The Mind Robber* has a stunning opening episode but the following four episodes lurch into fantasy and borderline whimsy. It had tremendous production issues to overcome and did this with creativity and confidence under the direction of a debuting director. Lesser productions would have crumbled.

Andrew Hickey's study not only details the production difficulties but also the themes and concepts underpinning the storyline. Hickey starts by contextualising the adventure's place in Season Six and offers brief details of the key personnel involved in the production as well as the problems that they had to surmount. He then dissects the themes running through the storyline and pauses to consider the structure, or rather how writer Peter Ling may have perceived the structure of a *Doctor Who* story. Hickey provides a credible argument that Season Six is not as bad as some fans perceive it to be which provides him with a springboard to examine the regular characters.

This all takes us to the halfway mark of the book where Hickey dives head first into an examination of the characters that populate *The Land of Fiction*, embellishing their backgrounds with titbits of trivia. Every character from the Minotaur to the Master of *The Land of Fiction* is appraised and has their literary or real-life origins discussed.

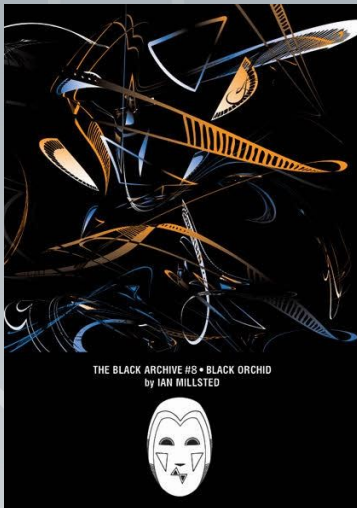
Shorter, but no less valid and valued, sections follow on the similarities between *The Mind Robber* and *The Celestial ToyMaker* and the further appearances of *The Land of Fiction* and its inhabitants in the further worlds of *Doctor Who* – print, audio, comic strip and so on.

Highlight of this quick-fire section has to be Hickey's analysis of that scene, you know the one with Zoe's bottom, and how it has negatively impacted on the reputation of the story.



Immaculately footnoted and referenced, this enjoyably written and argued book continues a high calibre of critical reviews.

## Black Archives #8 Black Orchid By Ian Millsted



This is the first Peter Davison story to be covered by the *Black Archives* and the task has been assigned to Ian Millsted. Publisher Obverse has decided to cover one of the less celebrated stories from the era and whilst *Black Orchid* may only be two episodes long Millsted gets a lot of mileage from the story taking in several large themes before cricket is given any in-depth coverage.

Millsted starts his book by establishing what type of story the writer is placing the Doctor in. The answer is we are in murder mystery territory – think Agatha Christie or *Lord Peter Wimsey*. There are many echoes of such stories within *Black Orchid* and I was surprised to learn that a TV adaptation of a Lord Peter Wimsey story features Wimsey disguising himself in a harlequin outfit. Millsted digs deeper and finds more echoes such as Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*.

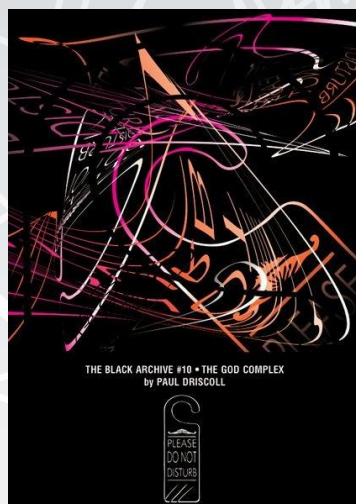
Millsted earns his living writing about comics and his knowledge of the medium comes in handy as he discusses the depiction of George Cranleigh as the central “monster” of the story. Chapter three focuses on the meaty subject of class, race

and colonisation. Millsted analyses how the topic has been depicted in the Fifth Doctor's previous incarnations as well as using it as a prism to examine *Black Orchid* itself.

Cricket is finally covered in chapter four which fact checks some of the cricketing claims by the Doctor before linking the use of class and race in the story. Chapter five examines the thorny issue of twins starting with a rundown of the many incidents of twins or doppelgangers within the series, Millsted's comic book expertise helps him to analyse the use of the harlequin figure within the story by comparing it to the DC Comic's character Harley Quinn.

The issue of whether *Black Orchid* is a true historical adventure and an overview of the brief further appearances of the Cranleigh family in the wider world of *Doctor Who* fiction round off the book. If you think *Black Orchid* is just a simple whodunit or Agatha Christie knock off then this book will make you think again. You may even be bowled over by it...

## Black Archives #9 The God Complex By Paul Driscoll



It's time for the Matt Smith era to come under scrutiny in the *Black Archives* range and *The God Complex* offers a feast of influences ranging from George Orwell's *1984* and Stephen King's

*The Shining* through to the Minotaur from mythology. Such a dense seam of material requires a bigger than standard book. The previous *Black Archives* publication covering *Dark Water / Death in Heaven* had the honour of being the longest book in the range so far. However, *The God Complex* now holds this honour, beating the record by a mere four pages.

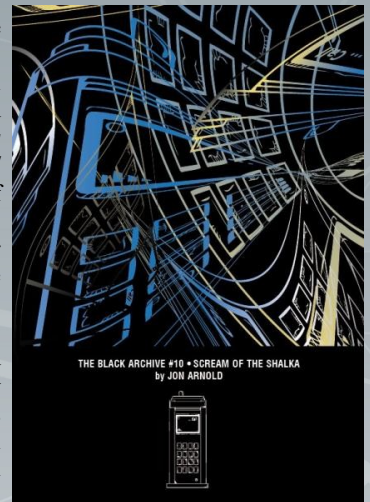
Driscoll doesn't mess about and plunges straight into things by explaining the origin of the story as a vague suggestion by Steven Moffat through to it being shaped by writer Toby Whithouse's love of Greek mythology. Next is a discussion of how the series' own past also influences the storyline with excursions through topics such as the base-under-siege format and the use of religion and faith in the series.

We're not even halfway through the book and a lot of ground has already been covered, but Driscoll is far from finished. A look at the use of faith / fear within the story is filtered through how the fear is derived by different techniques and approaches through the script and production. The fallibility of the Doctor and just what type of hero he is also dissected. This latest *Black Archives* is as labyrinthine as the hotel in the story Driscoll is analysing. Truly epic in its scope and all the better for it. Read and rewatch *The God Complex* in a new light.

## Black Archives #10 Scream of the Shalka By Jon Arnold

I never expected *Shalka* to feature in this range as it never had a TV broadcast and so it was outside the remit of the books. However, I am so happy Obverse Books had the good sense to bend the rules and cover the story anyway.

Jon Arnold, who launched the range with his book on the episode *Rose*, returns for a look at this 2003 relaunch of the series which attempted to redefine the character and the programme for a new century whilst embracing a new medium. It was a dead end due to bad timing – the Doctor was



returning to television in a new series under the leadership of Russell T Davies – so no further episodes were made.

Arnold covers the above in his introduction before commencing on a tantalising journey into what could have been. This is supported by an appendix which features further potential stories for the Richard E Grant incarnation including a detailed episode breakdown for an intended sequel, *Blood of the Robots* by Simon Clark.

The book opens with an exploration of the character of Grant's incarnation along with an examination of how Grant played the role. Chapter two covers the companion, Alison, in a similar fashion with chapter three analysing the character of the Master. The book would be shorter than other *Black Archives* publications if it wasn't for the *Blood of Robots* material which makes for concise, but incisive, read.





# TWICE UPON A TIME REVIEWED

"It's the end, but the moment has been prepared for."

Those words spoken by Tom Baker's Fourth Doctor on the brink of his regeneration in *Logopolis* (1981) could also be applied to the 2017 Christmas special. It's safe to say expectations were high thanks to the announcement of Peter Capaldi exiting the series alongside showrunner Steven Moffat, Jodie Whittaker taking over as the first female Doctor, and then the return of David Bradley playing the role of the very first Doctor (Bradley had previously played actor William Hartnell, who originated the role, in the 2013 docudrama *An Adventure in Space and Time*). So did *Twice Upon a Time* live up to those expectations or did it crash and burn?

Given the sheer amount of elements on its plate, Moffat certainly had a lot to play with given the hour of screen time. Perhaps it's not a surprise then that the special's plot is relatively straightforward. Picking up both from the end of the Series Ten finale and between scenes in the First Doctor

regeneration story *The Tenth Planet* (1966), the special finds the First and Twelfth Doctors dealing with moments of frozen time with a group of glass-like creatures snatching people out of time at the moment of their deaths. Two of those they encounter is a First World War British army captain (played by Moffat's *Sherlock* co-creator Mark Gatiss, whose previous *Who* screen appearances include the title role in the 2007 episode *The Lazarus Experiment*) and former companion Bill Potts. The special, then, is a bit of a runaround but one that packs a punch.

A punch that is driven home by the characters and performances. Moffat uses all of the aforementioned characters to explore how we face death, something appropriate given that *Twice Upon a Time* marks the end of an era in many respects. It's something which Capaldi, Bradley, and even Gatiss play wonderfully in their own ways at different times throughout the hour. Indeed, some of the best moments



being the two Doctors together, from very different ends of their lives, looking at each other as two old men raging against the dying of the light. Yet the end of the special is also a life-affirming one filled with hope for the future after spending nearly an hour looking so much to the past.

It's the looking to the past that will also help this special stand out. The special begins with footage from *The Tenth Planet* which morphs seamlessly from black and white with William Hartnell into newly-shot colour footage featuring Bradley which offers snatches of scenes long lost due to a BBC archive purge in the 1970s. It's wonderful to see those moments recreated as a long-time fan and it is perhaps fans who will appreciate those touches and another major reference that comes late in the special more than the average viewer. At times, though, it might be a bit much such as the return of a character (for lack of a better phrase) from a very early Capaldi episode or the over-played sexism of the First Doctor (something which was there back in the 1960s as part of the era but to a far lesser extent in the character himself). For long-time fans it's much fun, a chance for the Doctor and viewer alike to look backward and forwards all at once.

What *Twice Upon a Time* will be remembered for more than anything else is its closing two minutes or so. Regenerations have not been a forte of twenty-first century *Who* it must be said. David Tennant's regeneration in *The End Of Time* (2009/10) was spread across more than two hours and turned into a sloppy, poorly plotted, and over-sentimental mess with him moaning "I don't want to go!". Matt Smith's 2013 exit was tonally all over the place due to trying to cram so much into sixty minutes, though *Time of the Doctor* was redeemed somewhat by an excellent final scene for Smith. Indeed, only Christopher Eccleston's exit in *The Parting of the Ways* (2005) can be said to have really worked. Here though, Moffat gets it right with a scene that lets Capaldi say goodbye not just in character as the Doctor but to the role that he, as a life-long fan, had clearly always wanted to play. Moffat keeps it from being too self-indulgent before it gives way to Jodie Whittaker's much-anticipated entrance which will undoubtedly leave appetites whetted for her first full episode in 2018.

For all of those reasons, *Twice Upon a Time* is a winner. It might well be the best Christmas special *Doctor Who* has yet aired and is the best regeneration story we've had in more than a decade. More than that, it's the end of an era and the beginning of a new one, something that everyone involved from Moffat to Capaldi is intent on making clear. It's a look back and a look ahead with nostalgia on one hand and hope on the other.

Goodbye chaps and thank you for all the *Who*.

| Matthew Kresal







Breath, “Am I a good man?”

Around the endpoint of Series Nine, he seemed to be heading for the conclusion of “not always, but most of the time yes, I am.” Then the series of events kicked off by Clara’s death at the end of *Face the Raven* happened.

This, in short, completely messed the Doctor up. He crossed the line and became, in a way, a version of the Valeyard. However, it was not his life he wanted to preserve: it was Clara’s. He was, as the General will attest, willing to eschew all his principles, going so far as to commit murder to ensure Clara didn’t leave him. Her decision to remove herself from him, memories and all, was an important metaphorical slap in the face.

Throughout Series Ten (and that includes the intervening Christmas specials) we see the Doctor reeling from that slap. He’s unwilling to take on a new companion, save for a reconstituted Nardole, who’s really more there as the Doctor’s chaperone. He’s there to keep the Doctor from causing trouble and getting involved.

Gee, and the Greeks said Sisyphus had an impossible task.

But the Doctor decides to take Bill on as something more akin to a pupil. In the end, she did two things. Much like Mel and Donna before her, Bill brought a genuine love of travel to the TARDIS. She wasn’t a mystery for the Doctor to solve, she didn’t have a timeline that was tied in knots, nor did she have any romantic interest in him. For the first time in a long time, the traveling companion was, in a way, relatively simple, and that reinvigorated the still-faltering Doctor.

The second thing Bill did – not alone, and not directly – was kill that new spirit inside the Doctor when she was turned into a Cyberman in *World Enough and Time*. Now, personally, I’d lay the majority of the blame in this situation on the Master – and, to a more minor extent, Missy. Regardless, Bill’s fate whipped the rug out from under the Doctor’s feet, and the broken, well, *everything* he ended up getting in the fall was the last straw.

When we get to *Twice Upon a Time* we find the Doctor wanting to, at long last, die.

Not regenerate, but simply expire and leave the universe to its fate.

So, how does the First Doctor also wishing to simply die factor into all this? Well, it kicks off the whole plot by causing a serious error in the timeline and getting a certain Captain Lethbridge-Stewart (uncle of our favorite

**Personally, it’s hard to say much about *Twice Upon a Time* without going on about how much I liked it on the first viewing.**

Fair warning before we get started, this may be a bit all over the place.

For once, the *Doctor Who* Christmas specials’ tendency to lean too much on the saccharine side of things for my tastes seemed a good fit, especially for this character piece. It makes a lovely counterpoint to the Doctor’s refusal to regenerate, and the way events unfold allows him to gain much-needed perspective.

Before I go too far into this, however, we need to throw things into reverse and go right back to before Peter Capaldi’s first story. Back to 2013.

*An Adventure in Space and Time* is a wonderful film.

While it’s not the most accurate depiction in the world, it does give a pretty good summation of what went into making the first few years of *Doctor Who*. But the real standout from the film was David Bradley’s depiction of everyone’s favorite wiry old turkey, William Hartnell. Reaction to his portrayal of the First Doctor, meanwhile, was more mixed.

Regardless, it was a welcome addition to 2013’s fiftieth anniversary celebrations. Little did anyone know that, four years on, Steven Moffat would call upon Bradley once again for a very special job.

Fast-forward to July 1st, 2017, right around 10-o’clock in the evening.

Now, I can’t speak for everyone else, but the

First Doctor’s surprise appearance at the tail end of *The Doctor Falls* had me shouting overjoyed expletives that I’d rather not repeat here. Jodie Whittaker’s casting had been, amongst my friend group, met with excitement. This had us geeking out something fierce. *The First Doctor was back!*

Admittedly, I’m more familiar with William Hartnell’s original Doctor through Big Finish’s excellent *Companion Chronicles*. I’ve seen the first three stories, plus *The Aztecs*, of his televised adventures. Taking this all in, perhaps I’m not the best person to examine the Bradley First Doctor’s character in *Twice Upon a Time* compared to Hartnell’s “real McCoy” in any great detail.

Capaldi is in fine form, as usual, and clearly adores the script. The fact that the story is not terribly action-driven and is mostly a character examination works wonders. In a certain light, you could compare it to a depressed adult hallucinating his child self. Capaldi’s enjoyment of seeing where his Twelfth Doctor is compared to the First in terms of growth, experience, and worldview is palpable.

So, we’ve established that it’s a character examination.

What does it actually say about the Doctor?

Well, there’s a lot to unpack here.

The Twelfth Doctor, as a character, has always struggled with the core of his identity. While the Eleventh Doctor was keen to mask any insecurities under silliness, wordplay, and explosive, distracting displays of emotion, Twelve is more the type to examine his failings and ask himself, as he does at the end of *Deep*



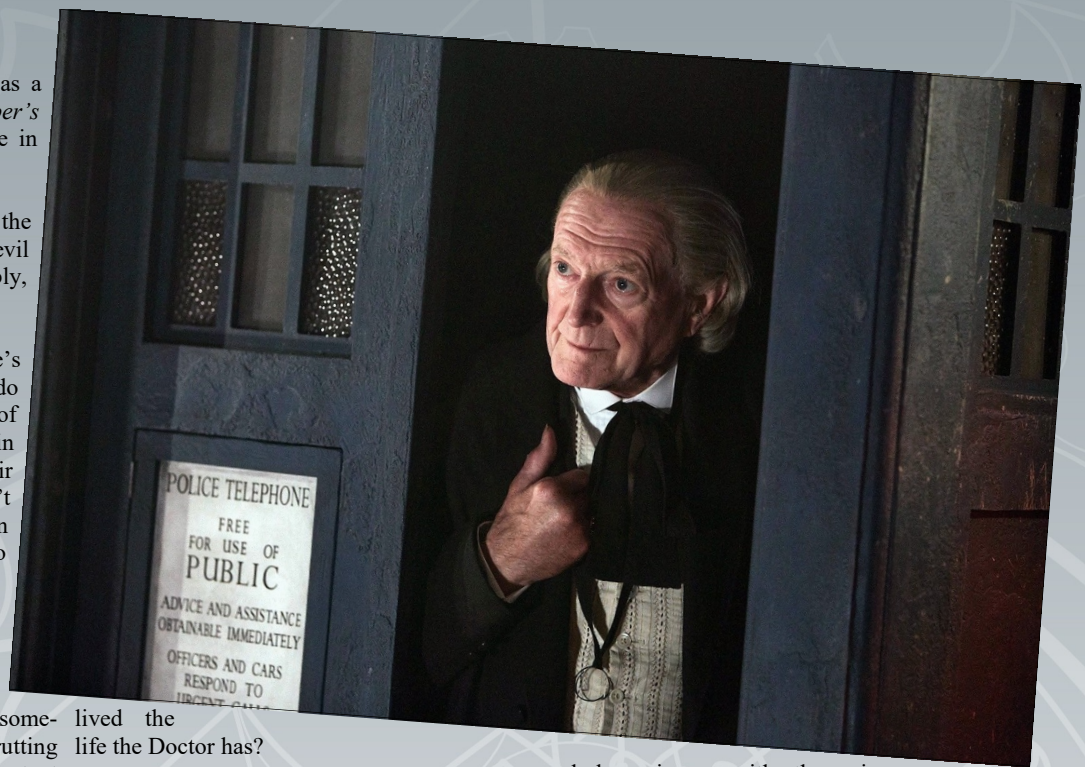
Brigadier, as his father was introduced as a very different character in *The Warkeeper's Crown* comic) ejected to the South Pole in 1986.

From there, we basically have a plot of the Doctor thinking there's a nefarious evil scheme happening – and not unreasonably, given his life – but there really isn't one.

Personally, I loved that little twist. There's no evil plot, just a glass robot trying to do its very noble and worthwhile job of preserving the memories of every being in existence at the moment prior to their death. The Doctor's rather stunned "I don't really know what to do when it isn't an evil plan" is a lovely moment. He looks so lost.

While the First Doctor seems to be written rather boorishly in terms of his views on women, he comes across very much as he did in the original three-and-some-change seasons. That is, a teenager strutting about the place trying to be the most important person in the room. He still has his inflated Time Lord ego here. Another nice touch is him wandering off after being told to stay put. I was reminded of *The Daleks* where, of course, the Doctor intentionally sabotaged his own ship just because he wanted to explore the Dalek city.

In contrast to the weary-yet-grandstanding Twelfth Doctor, the First seems almost stunted and definitely conservative. He's horrified by his future, especially the clips he's shown by Testimony. Now, in fairness, wouldn't you be if you'd



lived the life the Doctor has?

Oh, and before I forget, I'm not happy the Sixth Doctor was left out of that little clipshow.

In the end, when all is resolved and the Doctor's gotten his groove (and memories of Clara) back, it all ends in what's becoming the New Series' signature style. A regeneration that brings the house down. Seriously, if Twelve wasn't in the TARDIS, he'd have likely leveled the entirety of Ypres in a nuclear holocaust. Do we really need to keep making these things bigger and bigger? Eventually the Doctor's just going to go and regenerate and take the

whole universe with them in a gargantuan cosmic wave of fiery devastation.

Actually, that would be rather fitting, in a way...

So, at the end of it all, I'd reckon Twelve still isn't sure that he's a good man, but he's at peace with not knowing. He'll never know everything, not even about himself, and that's okay. There's always things left to discover and figure out, and that's what makes him himself. That's why he's the Doctor. The answer to the question "am I a good man?" is simple: "That's for you and your actions to decide."

Overall, I felt that by bringing in the First Doctor, Steven Moffat pulled off a neat trick that allowed him to work outside the box, examine the Doctor as a character, and really make this special something, well, special! It's not exactly *Heaven Sent*, but it didn't need to be. It took the Twelfth Doctor's era and capped it beautifully. And now, with the advent of Jodie Whittaker's Thirteenth Doctor, we can place this metaphorical bottle on the shelf and begin filling a new one.

Let it age like a fine wine. The Doctor certainly does... most of the time.

| James P. Quick





# REVIEWED: THE DOCTOR FALLS



How do you kill a Doctor?

It's the question facing every writer of a regeneration story. Old age? Saving the universe Sacrificing his life for another? Or as a punishment? What could possibly bring down a Time Lord who can take down whole invasion fleets before breakfast and stop a Time War before lunch? It's a question locked into the show's format now, with every incoming Doctor being questioned about how long they intend to stay. The age of publicity and rumour dictates that every incoming Doctor is an event, so making it a surprise is a near impossibility. Therefore it's impossible to watch a Doctor's last episode without knowing what's coming. Every regeneration story since the show began transmission in colour (with the exception of *Time and the Rani*, thanks to circumstances of production) has been squarely about the change in the lead character: the farewell and rebirth. And since the show returned in 2005 it's been a showcase for the lead actor: their grand curtain call.

*The Doctor Falls* (2017) is no different. This is an episode defined by the change we all know is coming. Each of the main characters has to deal with the consequences of changing or not changing. The most obvious of these is Bill, who has to come to terms with the situation she ended up with in *World Enough and Time* (2017). Pearl Mackie gets some magnificent dramatic material here, both with Capaldi's compassionate Doctor and John Simm's needling, irredeemable Master, and her portrayal of Bill's trauma caps what's been an excellent first season for her. When she finally comes to terms with the change she receives her reward – perhaps it feels a touch convenient but to leave her stuck inside a Cyberman's body would've been totally wrong given her upbeat role. Nardole finds his time with the Doctor has altered his nature in a way perhaps even he didn't realize – the situation we leave him in is uncertain but in finding love perhaps he receives the only reward he can. And then there's the Master and Missy. The two Masters is obviously an attention grabbing premise, a tarty headline that Steven Moffat can use to hook potential casual viewers but in this story it's so much more than that. The fate of Simm's Master lies in his refusal to change (defined by his perfect reaction to Capaldi's showpiece speech) – he refuses the offer of redemption and thereby dooms himself. He also dooms his future self by refusing to accept that he'd ever change so dramatically as to consider altruistic notions. Missy's fate is possibly the saddest and most beautiful of all. Having been asked to stand by the Doctor 'without hope, without witness, without reward' she fulfills every word of the phrase that's defined the second half of the season. Her final smile is well earned. Her only reward is dying in the knowledge that change is possible, even for a soul so weighted with sin as hers.





*"Capaldi's Doctor... Finds his principles in his darkest hour..."*

All of which brings us to the Doctor. We've seen Capaldi's character grow and evolve over three seasons, from the self-doubting good man, through the second season's aging rocker to this season's mentor / lecturer. He's grown into that good man role he questioned himself about. As in last season's *Heaven Sent* (2015) Steven Moffat puts the Doctor to his most extreme test. There it was enduring a Time Lord torture chamber for billions of years on the faintest chance of saving his best friend. Here it's in defence of a small outpost of humanity (well, a Mondasian variant) against a relentless, implacable foe. The Cybermen, never better than in the first part of this story, are defined as a natural force of unwanted change: a universal corruption of the desire for self-improvement. They're defined as an unbeatable foe of a type that arises naturally across different worlds at different times, a universal constant that can't ever be fully defeated because they spring from our most natural impulses. They prey on our desire to change. Sooner or later we must all change in greater or lesser ways but Capaldi's Doctor – perhaps the most formidable presence in the role since Tom Baker was in his prime – finds his principles in his darkest hour and refuses to change them. For all the pyrotechnics, for all the many versions of the Cybermen and the

Master and for all the Rachel Talalay's pitch perfect direction and beautiful cinematography the heart of the episode is the Doctor's speech about why he does what he does. It's not about winning. It's not about hate or blame or fun. It's not for any great reward – the stakes here are a few lives which may not last long, as significant as the shortest lived mayfly in universal terms. It's about reaching out a helping hand in dark hours, whether it's effective or not. It's ultimately about kindness, and that never changes.

That's what kills Doctors, whether it's sacrificing himself to stand up for his own principles against his own people, saving the universe from the Master, giving up his life to save one person or making a stand against overwhelming forces. It's the Doctor's Achilles heel, that he cares even about people he knows all too briefly. It's particularly explicit under Steven Moffat, with both Matt Smith and Peter Capaldi attempting to hold back the tide like Canute with that unchanging principle of kindness. Radiation poisoning? Falls? Spectrox toxemia? The energy of the time vortex? Old age? Surface considerations. Kindness is the Doctor's tragic flaw that kills him so often but keeps him coming back for more adventures; it remains his motivation and downfall. The

Doctor's kindness is what gives this daft series weight and ensures it outlasts all those series with morally compromised leads. It's also why, for all the calls for companions to suffer for what happens to them, that almost never happens. It'd be giving in to cruelty. Fiction allows us to rail against the horror of real life like that, and not give in to our worst impulses.

All that's left for Peter Capaldi and Steven Moffat is the change itself, a change we now know is cosmetically one of the biggest in the show's history. The Doctor must change his face and soon gender but the engine of the series will remain the same. That kindness. Underneath its musings on change *The Doctor Falls* is a restatement of the principles of the series laid out most clearly in Terrance Dicks's precept of 'never cruel or cowardly'. It's restated by the most prolific writer the series has ever had, through currently the best actor to hold the role and brought to us by a cast and crew delivering miracles on a BBC budget. That's why it's a near note perfect hour of television. Kindness.

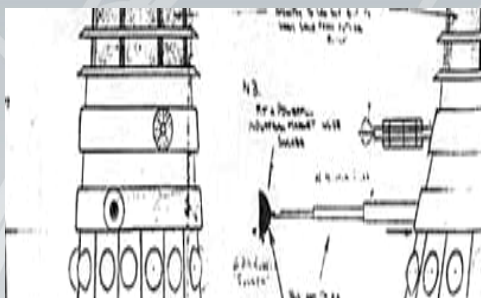
| Jon Arnold



# WHO YOU BUILD

Well hello again, if you're reading this then hopefully you are still considering building or are building your own Dalek. In this issue, we'll be looking at the shoulder section. And there is no other way to say this but this section will take the longest to build. However, don't be put off as daunting as it may seem, there is nothing in this section that you won't be able to handle.

Ray Cusick's original concept for the shoulders was to have the gun and the arm swivel from side to side on rings with the gun sitting above the arm.



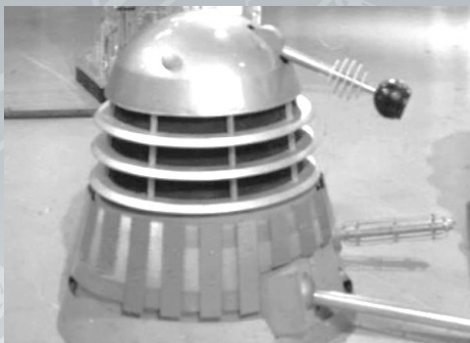
Ultimately this design proved to be unworkable and the arm and gun were fitted into fixed positions on the shoulders. The two-ring concept, however, was retained to the finished prop.



On *The Dead Planet* the collars were simply two aluminium bands wrapped around the main core. These were then either riveted or screwed into place.

The plain bands were retained for their next outing, *The Dalek Invasion of Earth*, with the addition of a dish fitted onto the rear to collect power transmitted from the saucer.

The shoulders would go through a further modification for their third outing *The Chase*, vertical power slats were added with mesh underneath on the upper ring.



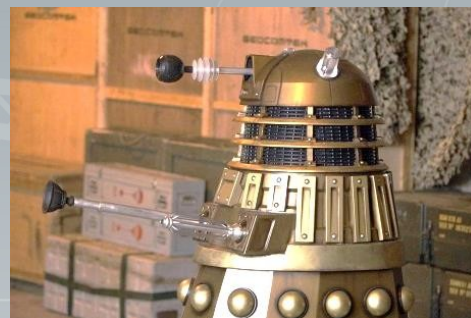
This then became the standard layout for most of the classic era of Dalek, until the 1988 story *Remembrance of the Daleks* where the white Imperial Dalek was introduced. This Dalek had a similar look to the previous style but the slats were moulded onto the core.



Then, in 2005, when *Doctor Who* relaunched the Dalek was given a whole new look and the shoulder section went through a complete redesign.

The team led by Mike Tucker stripped down the classic design, then beefed it up while maintaining the elements that were recognisable as the original Dalek and made it look more solid looking.

As well as retaining the slats, extra details were added on the ball joint areas as well as a recess



on the side of the gun boxes.

For both the classic Dalek and the 2005 version, the basic method of construction involves making the same basic core and building from there. As there is a slight difference in the two methods, I thought I would start with the classic Dalek mainly as it takes seniority, and you should respect your elders. Are you listening kids?

Both design builds start the same, the upper and lower profiles are cut out and then spaced out similar to the skirt section. As with the skirt the shoulder section will be clad on the outside.

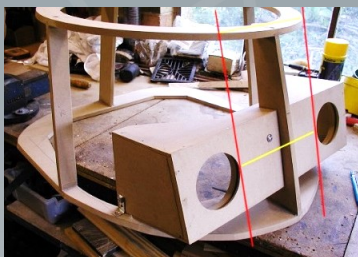


Therefore, when cutting the profiles out, please remember to subtract the thickness of the cladding off the outer profiles. Otherwise you'll find them slightly oversized when you're finished.

In constructing the classic design, the gun and arm boxes are usually built and fitted as a single separate unit to the central front spar, prior to cladding the frame. This method of constructing enables the angle and the distance between the arm and gun balls to be set correctly. It does, however, make the cladding a bit more awkward, but you can't have everything.

If it's the intention of the builder to use this section as the finished part, and not as a plug





for a mould, then before the box is fitted into the frame a method of fixing the ball joints in should be added.



Sorting the ball joints out at this stage will save a lot of extra effort in future.

Once the box is suitably fixed in place the cladding is fitted around the frame. If you're in the UK, buying bendable MDF from your local store would make this much easier, or use 3mm plywood and a lot of clamps.

Unlike the skirt, the cladding for the shoulders needs to be worked out by the builder. To save time and money, always good when Dalek building, the best way to work out the shape of the cladding is to wrap cardboard round the shoulders. The cladding is usually split into three parts. Front and two rear sections.



Once the profile is marked out it can be cut from the cladding material before gluing and nailing in place. As an extra support you may find that a few well-placed clamps will help hold the cladding in shape while the glue sets.



Once all the core cladding is in place and dried, it's down to filing and sanding to iron out any minor faults and gaps.

At this point I would go on about making a mould from the shoulders, but as I will be covering that after the 2005 version I'll bypass it here, however let's pause and consider why we would want to make it a fibreglass part.

As with the skirt, the shoulder will need a certain amount of strength in it. Most Daleks have this part hinged for access. When it hinges up it will also have the neck rings and dome sat on top of it. To make it strong enough to take the added weight without it splitting or popping a seam means it will turn out to be a heavy part. Making it into a single fibreglass part will enable some weight saving and at the same time make it a stronger. However, if you're building only one Dalek as most people do the expense may deter you from doing it.

If you're using the shoulder core as the finished part, it's a good idea to fibreglass reinforce all the joints and seams.



At this stage you've got a decision to make, mainly what generation

classic Dalek am I making. Fortunately, unless it's the white imperial Dalek from the Colin Baker / Sylvester McCoy era, the same aluminium collars are used in all the builds.

Unlike other parts you might want to paint the core before you carry on with the build. Once the aluminium collars are fitted to the core, you don't really want to be trying to take them off again. The collars are usually riveted in place making it an awkward prospect to achieve.

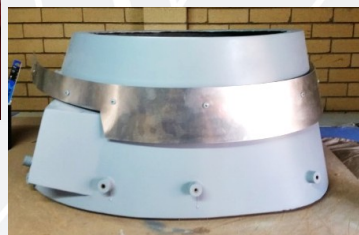


The collars are normally made from 1.5mm aluminium and are spaced out from the shoulder core by about 10mm to 15mm, depending on how you want it to look. As with the core, using cardboard to work out the profile of the collars will save a lot of time and expense.

Cutting aluminium with tin shears is reasonably easy but also produces fairly sharp edges, so unless you really enjoy slicing your fingers, I strongly recommend you wear tough gloves. Just saying. Once you cut the profile out using the shears, you'll need a file and emery cloth to smooth out the shape and remove any sharp edges.



Before fitting the collars onto the Dalek, gently bend them round a suitable drum or even the unspaced part of the shoulders, this will help produce a smooth band when

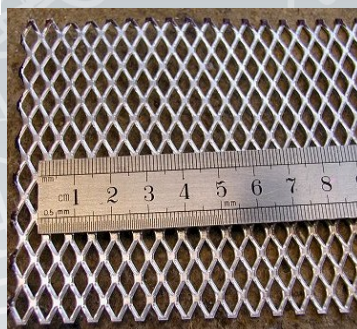


fitted.

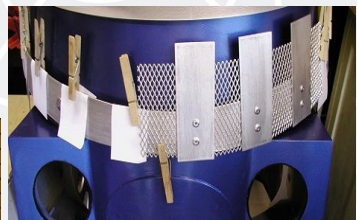
Once both aluminium collars are in place, if you're building the William Hartnell *Dead Planet* version, otherwise known as the Mk1, you'll be done. To turn it into an invasion type, otherwise known as the Mk2, you'll need to fit a parabolic dish on the back of it.

If you're building a *Chase* onwards version, otherwise known as the Mk3, you'll need to add mesh and slats to the upper aluminium collar.

Using the same profile previously worked out for the upper collar, expanded aluminium mesh is cut out and fitted to the upper band. The mesh is held in place by the 17 large slats and 6 small slats spaced around the upper band. These slats are also cut from 1.5mm aluminium and are fixed by riveting them onto the upper collar.



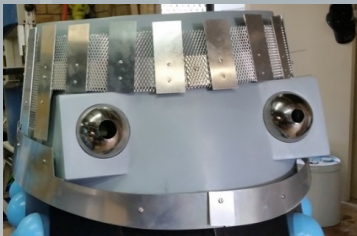
The small slats are evenly spaced out on the thinner front section of the upper collar and the larger ones are spaced out by the same amount round the thicker section. Two rivets are used for each slat. On the TV prop Daleks the rivets were drilled fairly randomly. If you wish to have an as-seen-on-screen look to your Dalek then try having a look at [www.Dalek6388.co.uk](http://www.Dalek6388.co.uk), their site is very informative and full of useful pointers.



The arrangement of the slats starts with the front two small slats spaced equally to the centre upper



collar. The rest of the slats are then set around the collar by the same distance. To help work out the spacing of the slats, paper or pieces of card cut out to the same width of the slats and arranged around the collar will really help you sort the positioning out.



Over time the slats and the mesh were painted various colours, and due to some rough handling by stage hands, the props were patched and painted as needed. As most builders like to have a showcase prop, well to start with anyway, painting the mesh and slats prior to fitting will help keep things looking tidy.

The 2005 Dalek shoulder section has many marked differences to the classic Dalek shoulder section, although the shoulders start life in very much the same way as the classic version. The core, upper and lower collars make up a single part. The upper collar sits directly under the first neck ring, and the lower collar is multi-layered. There is also a marked stepped section between the gun boxes. The slats are all seen as individual add-on parts bolted onto the finished shoulder section.

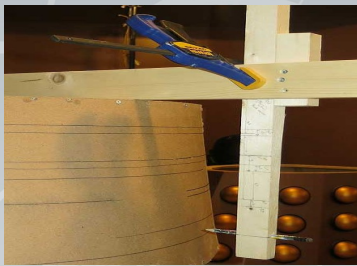
Again the upper and lower profiles are cut out and clad as before. However, unlike with the classic design the gun boxes are fitted in after the frame has been clad.



Once the core has been clad the upper and lower collars are marked out. As with the skirt section there

are a couple of ways of marking the collar positions on the core. The most commonly used method is the one you probably used to mark out the Hemis' positions during the building of the skirt section. Each of the distances are worked out from the upper edge of the core and using a frame the positions marked on with pencil. The positions of the gun boxes are also marked out, so the holes can be cut.

It's not necessary to mark all the details on the core in this case, however, it will help you work out how the chamfers sit after, if you do.



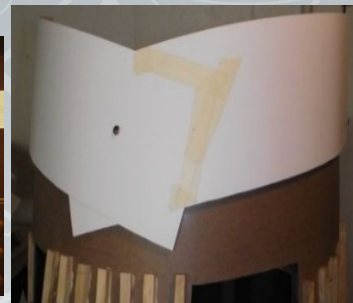
Unlike the classic design the gun boxes are fitted into the core after it's clad. New detailing was added to the gun boxes along with a recessed section to the side of the gun boxes. On the front of the shoulders another recessed detail was added replacing the oval seen on some of the versions of the classic design. The gun box detail is a minor change in its design, but it does cause a few problems if you're planning on making it a fibreglass part. The two boxes are made up and fitted into the shoulders, leaving them slightly proud so that they sit flush when you add the front detail.



Spacing blocks are then glued or screwed onto the core itself. It might be worth remembering that there will be additional cladding added, so again remember to subtract the thickness from the spacing blocks.



As before card is wrapped around the spacers and marked to obtain a profile. This method is used a lot to obtain profiles as it saves money on wasted material. So to save me having to type it over and over again, please can we take it as read you'll use this method for all the profiles.



As I said before the lower collar steps out twice. The lower collar profile is produced in a couple of ways, both have merits so it's up to the builder which to use. The first method is to space out the larger section of the lower collar the clad it all the way round. The smaller step profile is then spaced out before being clad again.



Alternatively, the lower collar can be produced by fitting spacers with both profiles cut out on them.

This method requires you to work out the shape of the spacers a bit more carefully. Due to the angle on the shoulder section changing as it goes around, the spacers need to be made slightly different to accommodate these changes.



Whichever method you choose, once the spacing and cladding has been completed the gaps will need to be filled to strengthen the cladding.

Okay, now I must admit I enjoyed this bit a little bit more than I should have, but that's the big kid in me. Expanding foam is normally used to fill the gaps. Once it sets the foam will harden and strengthen the profile, holding it in the right shape.



The foam is easy to trim back with a craft knife once its set, and the profiles are finished off using car body filler. The lower edge of the upper collar has a chamfer on it; this chamfer is then repeated on the upper edge of the lower collar and across the gun boxes. A profile



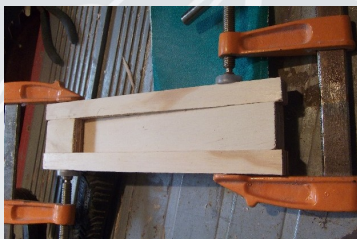
piece with the correct angle cut into it will help achieve an even edge round it, as well as ensure the same chamfer is produced on the lower collar.

The outer step of the bottom collar has a flat profile on it that steps down just as it gets to the boxes, then continues between them at the front.



If you're planning on using this part as a plug for a fibreglass mould, then the holes for the pivot balls shouldn't be cut out.

Equally, spending time on filing and correcting any errors will be worth the effort, since the mould will replicate any errors in the finished part. If you're not planning on making it in fibreglass, then really you want to make the part the best you can make it anyway. So take your time with it, it's a lot of filling and sanding. But this is one of the stand out parts of the build.



Mike Tucker's team made the new shape slats more heavy duty and solid looking. The slats come in three sizes: a large single one positioned centrally at the front, two pairs of smaller ones either side of the central one, and 13 long ones spaced equally round the rest of the shoulders.

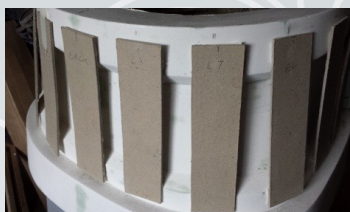
Either way, unless you have a 3D printer, the slats are usually made from 6 pieces glued together. The basic slat is first produced using 4 pieces of wood, the central piece is

set back to produce the recess in the slat. I'm not a fan of MDF so I made mine from plywood.

However, I can say wholeheartedly that I wish I'd used MDF. Stopping the wood grain from showing through on the finished part was a nightmare. It took a lot of filing and sanding and then lots of layers of primer. My advice for what it's worth is to use MDF.

In the UK, MDF and plywood tend to come in 18mm thick; the slats need to be 16mm thick. The rear of the slat needs to be trimmed flat prior to fitting so removing the additional 2mm thickness at same time is a good idea. Once trimmed up the bolt-retaining hole positions need pre-drilling.

Okay, it's cardboard cut-out time again. The sole large slat sits centrally between the gun boxes and a large slat in the middle of the back. The remainder sit round the shoulders, evenly spaced out. The contour of the shoulder section changes as you go around it. The gap in the slats will only sit evenly spaced on the upper collar. Using cardboard the same size as the slats allows the placing to be worked out, checked and positions marked.



When the BBC built their Daleks the slats were fitted a bit haphazardly; if you would like to see how bad it looks misaligned, have a close look at theirs.

Set the tops of the slats square to the top of the upper collar and about 20mm down. Once you have them all lined up, use the predrilled slats to drill the bolt holes onto the shoulders.

The slats are held in place by coach bolts. To produce the recessed holes, first use a 16mm flat head spade drill in the predrilled hole. Recess it until the bolt head is just below level with the slat, and then drill the hole out to 6mm.



The slats need to be curved on the back to match up with shoulder section. Low tack masking tape is used to protect the shoulders and car bondo used to fill in the gaps. Using low tack masking tape allows the slats to come off the shoulders for sanding. If you use normal tack masking tape the slats will be nearly impossible to get off.



Each of the slats will end up being made to fit one location so as you complete them, remember to mark their location. When I did mine, I primed them as I went along – it used a fair amount of primer. But I found it helped show any imperfections that need filing or sanding better.

After all the slats are complete and drilled in place the shoulders will be ready for painting.



At this stage you can use the shoulders as built, but if you're planning on making the part a fibreglass section, then in both cases prior to fitting any slats or collars you'll need to make your mould from the plug.

The classic Dalek shoulders, by virtue of it having little detail, can be turned into a two-part mould, in fact the original Shawcraft design was kept simple in order to allow it to be cast in fibreglass. The 2005 version, however, can't be a two-part mould, the new detailing on the gun boxes and front detail would prevent it demoulding. Therefore the 2005 shoulder needs to be at least a three-part mould. As with the dome, the shoulder plug will need polishing with mould release wax. We'll be adding plywood separator boards to form the mould walls, these will need wax polishing as well.



Looking at the 2005 version, the front section of the shoulders should be isolated to form 1 part of the mould. Separator boards are attached to the plug running flush with the side of the gun boxes. These boards will not be part of the finished mould but will help form it. Any gaps in the boards are plugged to prevent resin leaking through. Good old plasticine is good for this. It should be readily available from most model shops or any kid's toy shops. Alternatively, if you live in the UK and are ordering your materials from CFS, they also stock plasticine along with those important cookies. The separator boards should also have locating pegs added to them. Even though these parts will be bolted together, moulding the pegs will ensure the parts are correctly aligned and add strength to the joint.

Once the front section and boards are polished, a layer of PVA mould





release is painted on. Okay, for those of you who missed the first edition of this column, PVA is not the glue, it stands for PolyVinylAlcohol, and it's a release agent.

To get a really good finish on the final part, the surface of the mould needs to be as smooth as possible, to achieve this gel coat is used. Once the PVA has fully dried a good coat of gel coat is painted onto the plug and separator boards; the gel coat will not normally fully harden on its own and remain sticky to the touch. Once the gel has had time to go off, a layer of surface tissue should be added. This is not totally necessary but it will help prevent strands breaking through the gel layer. Follow the tissue layer with a least two layers of 450g fibreglass on the plug, but add an additional layer of 450gsm on the plywood separators. You don't want the mould itself to be solid, otherwise demoulding the final part will be a pain. But at the same time the joining walls need to have some strength. Then a final layer of surface tissue. Always remember to clarify the individual layers as you go along to make the finished mould as strong as possible and remove any air pockets.



If like me you happen to have an air compressor, then adding air fitting to the mould will help to remove the finished part. I've lined the fitting up with the centre of the ball joints.

Once the fibreglass has fully cured one of the side dividing boards is removed. A further dividing board is then added to the rear middle of the plug to form one side of the mould. Again alignment pegs are added to the board.



The plug and the separating board are waxed and polished, and a coating of PVA added as before, but in addition the newly-formed fibreglass joint will also need both. Again layer up the side using gel coat first, surface tissue, 450gsm



mat and a final layer of surface tissue. Once fully cured remove both remaining dividing boards. Wax and polish the plug and fibreglass, joining walls before applying PVA, and laying up the final side as before.

Once the mould has fully cured, and before removing it from the plug, a series of bolt holes need drilling into it. The pegs that have been moulded will give you the alignment you need, but it still will need bolting together. You could try clamping it together, and it has been done, but the clamps tend to get in the way and the bolts will also allow for further alignment to take place.

After all the bolts have been drilled in place, it's time to remove the plug. The easiest parts of the mould to remove are the two sides. Make sure all the bolts are out and gently force a couple of wood or plastic wedges into the rear joint.



As gently as possible, ease the mould off the plug by freeing the edges as you split the joint. While you are doing this, it will probably go with a crack as it finally releases, mine did and I've heard others say the same when they built theirs, so don't panic.

Once one or the other side is free, the other parts tend to come off a lot easier. The front section tends to be the hardest to remove on the 2005 version, the classic not so much.

Once all the mould is free it will need a good wash with some diluted soapy water, before reassembling and leaving to fully dry and cure before moulding from it.

How long to give the mould before you use it tends to change depending on who you talk to, but give it a week and it'll be fine. Before moulding from it, separate the parts and wax and polish them individually. Ensure the joining walls are also polished. If any resin should seep in, it will stick the mould together as sure as day follows night. Ensure you work all



the small details. It will not harm a new mould if it gets plenty of coats, I gave mine 10 coats, and it will make life easier when demoulding it.

Once all the parts are waxed up, reassemble and bolt together the mould before giving it a coat of PVA.

Adding the PVA when assembled will help prevent routes for the resin to seep into. Laying up the mould is pretty much the same as before, except this time you'll be working on the inside with limited vision of what you're doing. Be prepared for this part taking a fair amount of time laying up, try and have everything as ready as possible before beginning.

As with the previous gel coat layers, the layer needs to be applied in one coat and not left to go off. The shoulder takes a lot of gel, and once you start only stop to mix other batches to continue the coat. Once the layer is complete, give it time to go off before continuing laying up with surface tissue and two layers of 450gsm fibreglass, before finishing with surface tissue.

It's worth mentioning that having various sizes of clarifying rollers will be needed for this part. There's a lot of little areas to get into, and all the fibreglass needs clarifying, otherwise voids could occur and the gel coat fail.

An area to watch out for, if you're making a 2005 shoulder, is the front details. Sight of this area is hard without literally sticking your head inside the mould, which is really not a good idea by the way, the resin fumes will be concentrated in there and chances are you'll stick your hair together.

Once the shoulders are fully laid up and cured, removal is the same as when you removed the plug. Gently persuade the sides of the mould to separate from the part by using wedges to release it.



If you've gone down the air assist



route, leave the front bolted together and only remove the rear bolts. When I did mine that way the air forced its way round and I was rewarded with it coming out in different locations. A couple of taps with a wedge in the rear joint and it came off easily. Hardly any swearing required.

Anyone who's being observant will by now have noticed that I've skipped the imperial shoulder section.



Why have I missed this design out? To be honest I didn't, but when I got to page 11 I thought hang on, this might be too long and I've covered a lot of the same ground anyway.



The classic and the imperial build start from the same basic core design, as does the 2005. The only difference with the imperial is the slats on the BBC Daleks were moulded on as part of the shoulders and not separate items. If you're building the imperial you'll notice a similarity with both the classic and 2005 version, look at the lower collar and compare the two.

Either way, I hope I've covered enough to aid whichever build you're working on.

If you are making the mould don't get tied down on how many parts there are to it, I've seen moulds comprising of 4 or 5 parts.

Whichever you think will allow you to get the part out intact is best for you. No one wants to struggle with a stuck mould.



Until the next happy building. Now, where did I put them cookies?

| Dave Etches

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# MASTER WHO

by Dan Tessier



## Prints of Darkness

The Master has never harassed the Doctor on the page as frequently as he has onscreen, but he still has many villainous schemes to enjoy in print. In the 1970s annuals, the Master dropped in occasionally to cause trouble for the Third Doctor and UNIT, and would continue to make the odd appearance in successive incarnations in annuals right up until the 2017 edition, with the short story "Yes, Missy." More substantial appearances began with *Doctor Who and the Doomsday Weapon*, the 1974 novelisation of *Colony in Space*, which began with an elderly Time Lord outlining the Doctor-Master rivalry to a younger colleague, only to realise the Master had made off with classified Time Lord files. The Master, of course, made numerous further appearances in novelisations, with all his twentieth-century stories adapted by the Target line.

It wasn't until Virgin began publishing *Doctor Who* fiction that the Master's life began to become properly fleshed out beyond what we saw onscreen. It began with the first *Decalog* volume in March 1994, a short story collection which included Marc Platt's *The Duke of Dominoes*. Ostensibly a Fourth Doctor and Sarah story, the real focus is on the Master, somewhere between his last encounter with the Third Doctor and his reunion with the Fourth. It's a rare chance, at the time, to see the Master on a mission of his own.

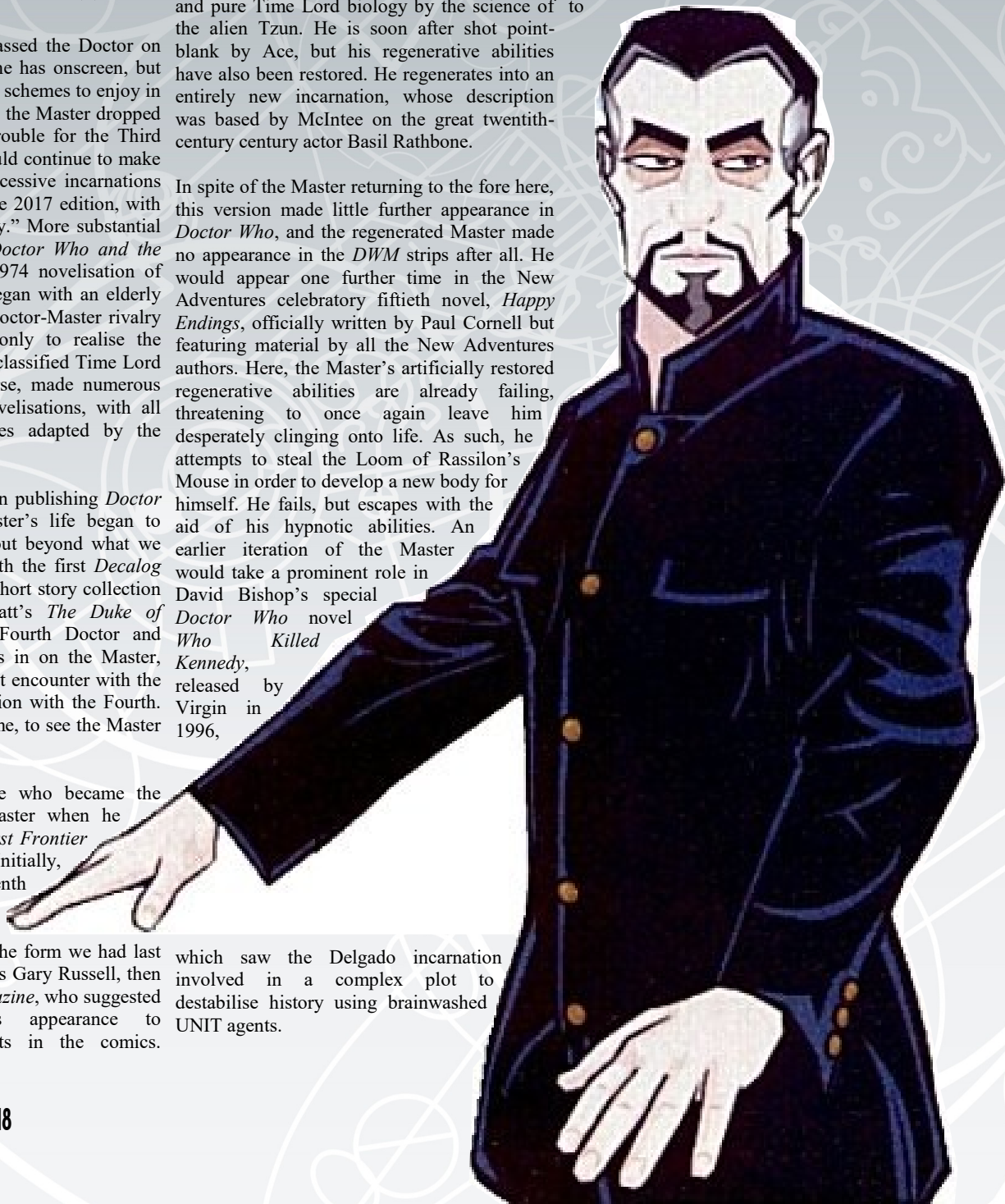
It was David A. McIntee who became the master of writing the Master when he penned the 1994 novel *First Frontier* for the New Adventures. Initially, this adventure for the Seventh Doctor, Ace and Benny was intended to reintroduce the Master in the form we had last seen him in *Survival*. It was Gary Russell, then editor of *Doctor Who Magazine*, who suggested changing the Master's appearance to circumvent likeness rights in the comics.

McIntee's story saw the Master, still suffering from the Cheetah taint, returned to full health and pure Time Lord biology by the science of the alien Tzun. He is soon after shot point-blank by Ace, but his regenerative abilities have also been restored. He regenerates into an entirely new incarnation, whose description was based by McIntee on the great twentieth-century actor Basil Rathbone.

In spite of the Master returning to the fore here, this version made little further appearance in *Doctor Who*, and the regenerated Master made no appearance in the *DWM* strips after all. He would appear one further time in the New Adventures celebratory fiftieth novel, *Happy Endings*, officially written by Paul Cornell but featuring material by all the New Adventures authors. Here, the Master's artificially restored regenerative abilities are already failing, threatening to once again leave him desperately clinging onto life. As such, he attempts to steal the Loom of Rassilon's Mouse in order to develop a new body for himself. He fails, but escapes with the aid of his hypnotic abilities. An earlier iteration of the Master would take a prominent role in David Bishop's special *Doctor Who* novel *Who Killed Kennedy*, released by Virgin in 1996,

which saw the Delgado incarnation involved in a complex plot to destabilise history using brainwashed UNIT agents.

It was McIntee who would continue to make the best use of the Master in prose in the years to





follow. Apart from an aside in his story *Housewarming* in the second *Decalog*, McIntee would continue his loose Master trilogy with the 1997 Missing Adventure *The Dark Path*. Set during the fifth season of *Doctor Who*, this novel was the first earnest attempt to explore the Master's backstory. In *The Dark Path*, the Second Doctor meets his friend and contemporary Koschei, a mostly honourable but still somewhat duplicitous Time Lord he knew at the Academy. In case there was any confusion as to who this was meant to be, he was illustrated as Roger DeGaldo on the novel's cover. There are some interesting aspects to the lore that McIntee introduced here. For one thing, the name Koschei originates with an old Russian fairytale, *The Death of Koschei the Deathless*. In this, and other folkloric stories of the time, Koschei is an ancient and powerful wizard who defeats death by hiding his soul in a succession of obscure objects and places, but is left skeletal and monstrous in form. The obvious inference is that someday, in his decaying form, the Master inspired the tales of Koschei.

Another aspect of note is that, originally, the War Chief was to appear as antagonist, cementing the popular fan idea that he and the Master were two incarnations of the same person. Virgin would not allow this, since Terrence Dicks' earlier novel *Timewyrm: Exodus* had established the War Chief as a quite separate character. In the events of *The Dark Path*, Koschei is driven to an act of genocide for what he considers the greater good, something which damages his already fragile sanity. Once he learns that he has been betrayed by not only the Doctor, but his companion and love Ailla, whom he thought dead, he finally snaps and vows to take control of the universe. Thus, the Master is born. The Doctor might have avoided the Master's enmity here if he hadn't stopped him using the Darkheart's power by turning it against him, trapping him in a black hole. He then uses the energy of almost all his regenerations in order to escape, leaving him

perilously close to the end of his lifespan once he appears on Earth in *Terror of the Autons*.

Not all of the elements of the novels would be embraced by later creative teams, and it's becoming more and more difficult to reconcile either the Master's backstory or his post-*Survival* life with later stories. In 1996, both the Doctor and the Master returned to television and the BBC began to publish their own *Who* novels, beginning with the novelisation of the film. In May 1997, the last of the *Doctor Who* New Adventures, *The Dying Days*, was

would allow him to survive his extermination in the TV Movie. Dicks made no attempt to tie *The Eight Doctors* events of the New Adventures, seeing the two ranges as entirely separate continuities.

Although the Master was, to all intents and purposes, dead at the end of the TV Movie, it was highly unlikely that we'd never see him again. Oddly, though, the BBC Books range made no attempt to revive the character for years. Instead, the Master's past lives were visited again. McIntee completed his Master trilogy in 1998 with *The Face of the Enemy*, a truly excellent novel which saw the Master take up the role of UNIT agent and advisor while the Doctor was off-planet. A sequel to *Inferno*, the novel saw the Master deal with the consequences of one of the Doctor's great failures, and also had him confront his own past when he encounters his parallel self – still going by the name Koschei, held captive and horribly abused by the forces of the alternative Earth. McIntee also makes the inspired choice of teaming the Master up with Ian and Barbara, who would, of course, have lived through the UNIT years. Barbara, notably, wants to understand just why the Master hates the Doctor so much, something which wrong-foots the Master who expected the Doctor's former companions to simply side with his rival.



***“...the novel saw the Master deal with the consequences of one of the Doctor's great failures, and also had him confront his own past when he encounters his parallel self...”***

published, followed a month later by the first of the BBC Eighth Doctor Adventures range. Terrence Dicks' *The Eight Doctors* saw the Master leave a final trap for the Doctor on the edge of the Eye of Harmony, in which he (or an echo of him), remained trapped. With his memory once more erased, the Doctor went back to points throughout his previous lives, including an adventure with the Third Doctor and an earlier Master. A later chapter caught up with the Master, apparently still in his Ainley incarnation, acquiring the Death Worm that

Koschei was given one final outing in Gary Russell's fannish First / Fifth Doctor novel *Divided Loyalties*, which featured a lengthy flashback to the Doctor's Academy days and made it explicit that the Master and the War Chief (*aka* Koschei and Magnus) were to be considered entirely different characters. A more notable appearance by the Master was in another 1998 release, this time in the EDA range: John Peel's *Legacy of the Daleks*. A sequel to *The Dalek Invasion of Earth*, this adventure was a hotchpotch of eras that saw the Eighth Doctor arrive in twenty-second century



London to encounter his granddaughter Susan and the Delgado incarnation of the Master. Silly fun, it ended with a grim scene in which Susan is revealed to be responsible for leaving the Master immolated and dying on Tersurus. This novel is another whose events have been rendered virtually impossible to reconcile with later stories in other media, which give quite different accounts of Susan's later life on Earth and of the end of the Delgado Master's life. It's also the only novel in the range to feature a significant exchange in Esperanto.

1998 continued to provide Masterly appearances, with November seeing *Doctor Who* reach its thirty-fifth anniversary. For this, Lance Parkin wrote *The Infinity Doctors*, a special anniversary novel and perhaps the best novel to be published with *Doctor Who* on the cover. Although part of the Past Doctor range, *The Infinity Doctors* featured an uncertain incarnation of the Doctor at an indeterminate time in Gallifrey's history. It also included a character called the Magistrate, an old friend and confidante of the Doctor, very clearly intended to be an incarnation of the Master. While the novel was written as deliberately difficult to reconcile with other stories, it wasn't without influence on later novels. A year later, *The Taking of Planet 5* by Simon Bucher-Jones and Mark Clapham introduced the War King, the Time Lord emperor who ruled Gallifrey during a war being fought in its future. The War King was implicitly hinted to be the same character as the Magistrate, and his description more than hinted that he is the Master. Although seen quite briefly, the War King would become a major figure in the *Faction Paradox* spin-off range, featuring heavily in the novel / encyclopedia *The Book of the War*, and being portrayed by the great Philip Madoc in Magic Bullet's *Faction Paradox* audio range.

Beyond these hints at his future, the Master continued to feature mainly in his earlier incarnations. Mike Tucker's 2000 PDA *Prime Time* saw the Ainley Master, still suffering from the Cheetah infection, attempt to secure a new body while defeating the Seventh Doctor and Ace. While it tied in with Tucker's audio dramas that featured Geoffrey Beevers as the Master, *Prime Time* is quite irreconcilable with the New Adventures account of the Master's post-*Survival* existence. Other appearances by retro-Masters included a temporary reversion to his decayed Beevers form in *The Quantum Archangel*, a spectacularly fannish Sixth Doctor PDA from Craig Hinton; and two further clashes between the Delgado Master and the Third Doctor and UNIT in *Deadly Reunion* by Barry Letts and *Last of the Gaderene* by Mark Gatiss. Paul Magrs also featured the Master in his brilliant send-up of the Pertwee years, *Verdigris*, in which Master looks deep into his

own eyes and urges himself to bow down before his own indomitable will.

The EDAs finally began to explore the Master's survival post-movie in 2001's *The Adventuress of Henrietta Street*, by Lawrence Miles. Set in a period in the novels in which Gallifrey and the Time Lords had been destroyed and the Doctor was keen to tie his allegiance to Earth, a mysterious Man with a Rosette appeared. Quite civil with the Doctor in this instance, the figure was described in the same terms as the Magistrate. From 2003, with *Scream of the Shalka* (also novelised as part of the PDA range) reintroducing the Master as an android, the EDAs began to hint at his existence within the Eye of Harmony, as a sort of ghost who occasionally conversed with the Doctor. The final EDA, Parkin's *The Gallifrey Chronicles*, was released after *Doctor Who* had returned to television in 2005. It reconciled the two possible fates of the Master somewhat, suggesting that both the Man with the Rosette could exist, alongside an echo of the Master within the Eye. Beyond that, however, the Master's situation remained obscure.

In 2006, Big Finish finally began to explore the Master's existence post-movie with its Short Trips range. The anthology *The Centenarian* featured the Master in two stories, *Prologue* and *Forgotten*, both by Joseph Lidster, which saw the Master escape the Eye of Harmony in phantasmic form, beginning a long period of body-hopping that would continue in audios starring Geoffrey Beevers.

Now that the Master has been resurrected in the new TV series, he has made a handful of appearances in the more recent books. *The Story of Martha*, out Christmas 2008, included the title story by Dan Abnett, which told of how Martha walked the Earth during the series three finale, and how the Saxon Master rid the Earth of an alien threat by torching Japan. Other shorter peices featuring the Master include two of the fiftieth anniversary year Puffin releases: the Third Doctor adventure *The Spear of Destiny* by Marcus Sedgewick, and its predecessor, Michael Scott's *The Nameless City*, which saw one Professor Thascalos entrap the Second Doctor. The Ainley Master once again tangled with the Sixth Doctor in Jake Arnott's 2014 Time Trip release *A Handful of Stardust*.

However, the

most interesting treatment of the Master in print in this period has to be *Harvest of Time*, a special novel release by acclaimed science-fiction author Alastair Reynolds. Published in 2013, this saw the Third Doctor and the Master join forces to battle the insidious alien Sild, but not before the Master made an audacious attempt to escape the world's most secure prison by sending out a distress call to his own future selves. What transpires is the Master's worst nightmare, as the Sild have captured him in multiple iterations from up and down history and enslaved them for their own ends. We see hundreds of incarnations of the Time Lord, from emaciated cadavers to children to – shock! – women, all in the thrall of the Sild. Most intriguingly, once the Master is far beyond his native era, and the influence of his other selves' mental gestalt, his evil nature begins to abate. It's a fascinating examination of the Master as a being who commits evil purely because that is his role in the narrative, and his desperation to escape once he is finally given a chance to break free from it. The Doctor, of course, doesn't believe him for a second.

While his print appearances may never be as frequent or ubiquitous as his times onscreen, the Master will surely continue to appear in new and familiar guises in novels and short stories for years to come. With appearances in BBC Books' *Myths and Legends* and *The Twelve Doctors of Christmas* most recently, and *The Missy Chronicles* out this year, there are surely many more Masterful adventures to come.





# CELESTIAL TOYROOM



*Celestial Toyroom* is the membership magazine of the Doctor Who Appreciation Society. It is the longest running Doctor Who fanzine in the world, the first edition having been published in 1976. Today it is the principal journal of the DWAS and is published twelve times a year - with the occasional double issue. Each issue is packed full with articles, reviews, interviews and artwork.

Together with its online sister publications, *Cosmic Masque* and *The Celestial Toyroom Annual*, it forms a collection of publications that all fans will enjoy.

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The Audio Archive randomizer this ish...ue has sent us to the Colin Baker era for an adventure which capitalises on the Sixth Doctor's loquacious abilities...

### ISH...

*"Ish. Almost a word. Not quite. A fragment. Something slightly askew."*

A dictionary definition: A suffix used to form adjectives from nouns relating to a particular place, describing a quality someone or something has or to mean approximately or slightly.

### SYNOPSIS

A conference of lexicographers: bromides in tweed. But the leading expert in the field is found dead by her own hand – and by her hologlyphic assistant. Is he responsible? Does the death fit any conventional definitions? Can the Doctor deduce who wrote the suicide note and why, exactly, it was riddled with spelling errors?

Peri should help out, but there's a guy. Someone who loves language even more than the Doctor. Maybe, she realises, enough to kill for. Or perhaps just enough to ask her out to dinner. Unless, of course, he's already spoken for...

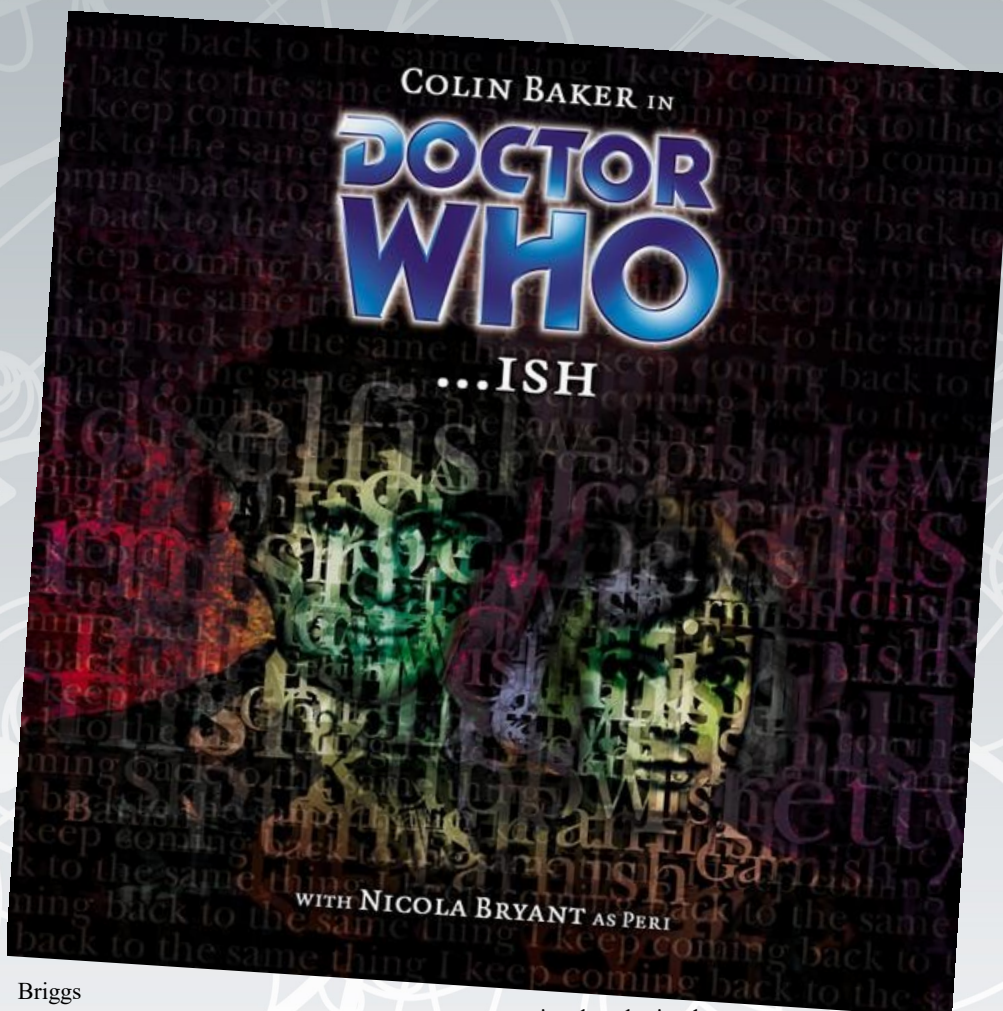
Is it madness? Seeking transcendence in the complete lexicon? Having the right words on the tip of your tongue but never quite knowing when to use them?

If so, how?

...ish

### Cast and Crew

The Doctor – Colin Baker  
Peri – Nicola Bryant  
Book – Moray Treadwell  
Professor Osefa de Palabra Hftzbrn – Marie Collett  
Warren – Chris Eley  
Symposiarch Cawdrey – Oliver Hume  
Annoying Delegate / Robot Waiter – Nicholas



Briggs

Writer – Phil Pascoe  
Director – Nicholas Briggs  
Producers – Gary Russell and Jason Haigh-Ellery  
Executive Producer – Jaqueline Rayner  
Music – Neil Clappison  
Sound Design – Neil Clappison  
Cover Art Designer – James Arnott

### PRODUCTION DETAILS

The play was commissioned as a result of an open submissions policy operated by Big Finish in 2000. Australian writer Phil Pascoe had

previously submitted a story titled *Blue Lightning* to the *Doctor Who* production office

during 1989 shortly before the TV series was cancelled.

On hearing about the open submission policy, Pascoe submitted a story proposal which ran to four pages and featured characters with clunky names such as Olat and Kopok. Pascoe was contacted via email by Gary Russell during August 2000 who asked for several revisions to



the synopsis. Pascoe emailed his revised document in late January 2001 which met with approval from Russell who arranged to meet the writer at a *Doctor Who* convention in Sydney, Australia during February where he commissioned the script for production. The first draft was delivered in July 2001.

As this was Pascoe's first ever script a lot of work was required to prepare it for production. Nicholas Briggs felt it lacked dramatic punch and Colin Baker was wary of the script at first, but eventually grew to enjoy it. He even brought his own dictionary to the studio when recording to consult when faced with some of the more difficult words in the script. Pascoe specifically wrote the script for the Sixth Doctor and Peri.

The play was recorded on 6 and 8 March 2002 at Moat Studios

Clayton Hickman created a subtle cover design based on the then popular Magic Eye pictures which featured the faces of the Doctor and Peri. BBC Worldwide rejected the design and asked for the faces to be made clearer.

#### TRIVIA

*Ish...* was the 35th Big Finish release in their monthly *Doctor Who* range and the 10th release to feature Colin Baker in the main role.

When the Doctor swears in Delphon it is a reference to a line of dialogue from *Spearhead from Space*. The language involves raising and lowering eyebrows so no sound is heard. The Doctor makes reference to an encyclopaedia that was too heavy to lift. The book "ran from DAL to..." he says before he is cut short. This is a reference to Terry Nation's story that he found the name of the Daleks when he saw an encyclopaedia which ran from DAL to LEK.

The play was previewed in *Doctor Who Magazine* 321 with a full page comic strip illustrated by Martin Geraghty.

When the Doctor and Peri use American and English terms for lieutenant (loo-tenant and left-

tenant) this refers back to a similar joke in *The Twin Dilemma*.

The first drafts of the script used individual episode titles with the first instalment called *Late Entries*. Episode two bore the title *In/active Vocabularies*, the third was named *Affixations* and the final episode *Appendicitis*.

The original pressing of the CD had the number 34 printed on the spine instead of the correct number 35. This was corrected for subsequent pressings.

The character Warren was originally named Phantome in the draft scripts.

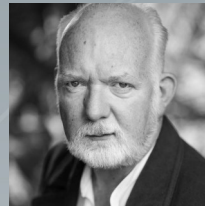
Dialogue in episode one refers to a trio of lexicographers; Sir James Murray, Noah Webster and Samuel Johnson. Murray was a Scottish lexicographer who was the editor of the *Oxford English Dictionary* from 1879-1915 whilst Johnson compiled *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1755). Webster is described as a vandal by the Doctor, due to his belief in developing cultural independence for the USA with an emphasis on a distinct language with its own idiom, pronunciation and style. This was embodied by the publication of his *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828).

*Ish...* shares some similarities with the central concept of the book *Pontypool Changes Everything* by Canadian author Tony Burgess first published in 1995. The book was made into a film in 2009 under the title *Pontypool*. The film followed the book closely with a new kind of virus spread through the use of language. Victims lose the ability to make sense of language, becoming stuck on a word or phrase, driving them into an animalistic rage.

#### Cast Biographies

##### Moray Treadwell

Treadwell also appeared in the Big Finish Sarah Jane Smith audio *The Tao Connection* as Will Butley. He also played the Captain in the streaming *Doctor Who* adventure *Death Comes To Time*. Treadwell



has been appearing on our screens since the mid-1990s with small roles in *Eastenders*, *Murder Most Horrid* and *Downton Abbey*. Film roles include *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest* (2006).

##### Marie Collett

Collett was born on 21 May 1938 in New Zealand. Her TV resume includes appearances in *Grange Hill*, *Doctor at the Top* and *Chucklevision* whilst her film career includes *Give My Regards to Broad Street* (1984). She has also narrated several talking books for the Royal National Institute of the Blind.



##### Oliver Hume

Hume has also appeared as Provost Carneill in the six-part Big Finish audio series *Dalek Empire III* as well as portraying Straxus in *The Light at the End*. He has also appeared in two short films – *Non People* (2004) and *Know It All* (2005).

#### Review

*Ish...* was the release that followed the legendary Big Finish drama *Spare Parts*. Perhaps because of the long shadow cast by the previous release the play is not fondly recalled by fans. It may also be because of the abstract and conceptual script which operates on several levels, in particular as a showcase for the verbose thespian talents of Colin Baker. Baker gets the bulk of the complex dialogue and throws himself into the role with glee, skimming just the right side of being OTT.

The script is densely packed

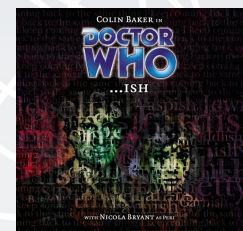
veering from bad puns to highbrow literary references (and often both at the same time) and suits Colin Baker down to the ground. The plot is traditional in structure and motifs, but allows an abstract monster in the form of language. This gives the story a fresh angle that would simply not work as a TV production.

The cast is small which allows for the characters to breathe and be well defined. Peri is particularly well served with a more considered and thoughtful character with more wit than her bickering onlooker on screen. The best guest performance has to be Moray Treadwell as Book who has the air of superiority and disdain akin to T.I.M. in *The Tomorrow People*.

The play is served well by a melodic, unobtrusive and subtle score which underpins the drama whilst sound effects are also suitably underplayed.

The adventure was a product of a gifted writer (why did Big Finish never use Pascoe again?) and a young audio production company at its most experimental. Some reviews have complained that the story is too hard to follow, but this should be seen as a chance to revisit and relisten to the production as opposed to a negative.

*Ish* can be described as wordy, garrulous, voluble, orotund, effusive, periphrastic, gobby, logorrhoeic or pleonastic. If you love words and the Engl...ish language then this production is certainly worth dish...covering... *Ish...ish...ish...*



*ISH* featuring Colin Baker and Nicola Bryant can be purchased from Big Finish at [www.bigfinish.com](http://www.bigfinish.com)





Commissioned by outgoing producer John Wiles and his script editor, Donald Tosh, the 1966 story *The Gunfighters*, the follow-up to John Wiles first story as producer, *The Myth Makers* was again written by Donald Cotton. The story reached the screen under the auspices of new producer and script editor Innes Lloyd and Gerry Davis, both of whom were keen to phase out the purely historical stories.

Until *The Horns of Nimon* in 1979-1980, *The Gunfighters* was regarded as the epitome of the bad *Doctor Who* story. It is very hard to see why, as whilst the story is far from perfect, it is by no means as bad as it is painted, nor is it the high comedy that it is often claimed to be.

The story has many good points. Designer Barry Newberry's recreation of the old West in a small BBC studio and on a meagre BBC budget is superb. Rex Tucker's direction is as good as the studio and budgetary conditions allow, and it is a great pity that a row with Innes Lloyd over editing a scene from the story

**"Until *The Horns of Nimon* in 1979-1980, *The Gunfighters* was regarded as the epitome of the bad *Doctor Who* story."**

probably cost Tucker the chance of working on the series again.

An odd decision of Donald Cotton's was to ask his friend, the cabaret singer Tony Snell who was performing in the US at the time, to undertake research for him. But considering how much historical inaccuracy there is in the story (though again, one wonders how much of this was at the behest of outgoing and incoming script editors, Donald Tosh and Gerry Davis), one might consider that Snell's photographic contribution was of greater help to Barry Newberry than to Cotton.

The casting is superb considering that it was probably budgetary constraints which failed to allow Tucker the opportunity of employing

actual US actors in the lead roles. Veteran actor and writer Reed R De Rouen is superb as Pa Clanton. De Rouen had both acted and appeared in several of the Honor Blackman *Avenger* stories, and with Jon Pertwee later wrote a *Doctor Who* story which alas, never saw the light of day. David Graham is superb in the observational role of Charlie the Barman, which is a far better vehicle for his talents than the appallingly portrayed Professor Kerensky would be in *City of Death* (1979). Canadian actor Shane Rimmer, at the time British TV and film's token 'American' does his best with the role of Seth Harper, but is given very little to get his teeth into as in many ways the script presents us not with portraits of people who had lived only about 85 years ago, but with a collection of Western stereotypes.



That said, in what can be judged as a mediocre but by no means bad story, wherein the first three episodes hinge upon a classic case of mistake identity (the Doctor is mistaken for Doc Holliday, a fact which the rascally gambling dentist seems only too keen to exploit), Laurence Payne as Johnny Ringo gives us the best and most three dimensional of his three *Doctor Who* roles. Morix in *The Leisure Hive* (1980) is scarcely memorable and Dastari in *The Two Doctors* (1985) was hampered by a weak script and awful costume. Apart from Anthony Jacobs and Reed De Roen as Pa Clanton, Payne is one of the few actors who treats the story with any great depth of seriousness.

For all that, *The Gunfighters* is not an out and out comedy. It isn't and doesn't try to be *Carry on Cowboy* or *Blazing Saddles*. As was once said of *Batman*, it is too serious to be funny and too funny to be serious. One can only assume that in the switchover of production teams from Wiles and Tosh to Lloyd and Davis the story became caught between the artistic desires of the two parties, Wiles and Tosh's desire for a comedic tale and Innes and Davis's desire that the series be taken altogether more seriously. The fact is that the script falls somewhere in between the two and as a result, in the eyes of fandom in general, ultimately fails. It would have been better had both production teams noted the desire for seriousness and could have thus experimented with the production of a Western story on a limited BBC budget and using what were then, limited BBC resources.

The only really excruciatingly bad moment of the story is the cliffhanger to part one wherein Steven sings or should that be murders 'The Ballad of the Last Chance Saloon' under threat of death from the Clantons. No disrespect to Peter Purves who probably felt as embarrassed as the viewers or possibly he didn't care as this was his penultimate story anyway, but had I been a Clanton I would have paid him just to shut up! The sound he makes is truly nauseating. Jackie Laine claimed that she wasn't a good singer. Could she really have been any worse than Purves one wonders?

'The Ballad of The Last Chance Saloon' is sung as a mood piece throughout by Lynda Barron who 17 years later would have a greater claim to *Who* fame as Captain Wrack in *Enlightenment* (1983). Barron is said to have sung in the BBC satirical show *That Was the Week that Was* which convinced Rex Tucker that her voice was better suited to the song, written by incidental music composer Tristram Carey, than his daughter Jane. Barron has established herself in such programmes as *Open All Hours*, *Grundy*, *Coronation Street* and the children's educational series *Come Outside*, but either she felt uncomfortable with Carey's lyrics or she is no great chanteuse. Her voice sadly comes over like a distressed dog begging to be put down. As an opener 'The Ballad' would have been superb, alas it is shoved down our throats at every opportunity so that an amusing lyric becomes annoying.



The Last Chance Saloon itself is an indication of how limited resources were on this story. The set itself is very small, just a bar, a few tables with a staircase leading to the upper floor where Doc Holiday, Kate Fisher and Dodo are hiding taking up most of the room. All right, so this is a BBC production and not a John Ford or John Sturges Western, but the saloon suffers from a lack of clientele. A few extras other than the Clantons whilst Steven 'sings' would have been nice as, in these more liberal times when the British mass media wasn't afraid upsetting every vocal minority group, a bit of cigar smoke to give the story a really Western feel.

After the superb opening which has Ike,

Phineas and Billy Clanton riding into Tombstone and shooting the Tombstone sign as a warning to Doc Holliday who had killed their brother Ruben (who never actually existed and was invented by Donald Cotton), a scene which draws upon the fact that the Clantons and McLaurys were arrested and later released on 25 October 1881 for carrying firearms within the Tombstone city limits, the storyline, such as it is, seems to hinge on the Doctor being mistaken for Doc Holliday, with the rascally Holiday taking advantage of the fact. Meantime, the Earps and Bat Masterson keep a beady eye on the Clantons and Johnny Ringo, thus bearing scant resemblance to the real events in Tombstone Arizona on 26 October 1881.

The much-underrated Anthony Jacobs steals the show as the rascally dentist, Doc Holliday, although Holliday never actually opened a practice in Tombstone. At first one is never at all sure which side Holliday is on. Doc Holliday thinks nothing of using the fact that the Clantons think that the Doctor is Doc Holliday and even lends the Doctor his monogrammed gun, yet he saves Dodo from the Clantons in the Last Chance Saloon. Holliday suffered from tuberculosis, which eventually killed him in 1887. It would have added a little depth to the story had this illness been hinted at in the script.

The core of the actual gunfight was a dispute between the Clantons and the McLaurys. Virgil Earp had become City Marshall of Tombstone in October 1880 and had soon recruited his brothers Virgil and Morgan as 'special policemen'. The Earps soon came into conflict with the Clanton and McLaury families. Tom and Frank McLaury sold cattle to Tombstone, which the Earps believed to have been stolen from farmers in Mexico. One wonders if there is actually any truth in this considering that Pa Clanton had actually been murdered by Mexicans whilst rustling up breakfast on 1 August 1881.

Cotton's script completely ignores the McLaurys. The storyline suggests that Wyatt Earp was Sheriff of Tombstone. As we have



said, Earp was in fact the deputy sheriff. The actual sheriff was John Behran. A rivalry between the two men had arisen after Behran's wife Josie Marcus left him for Wyatt Earp. Eventually Behran won his war of attrition with the Earps and left Tombstone soon after them.

Bat Masterson, although superbly played by Richard Beale, is an even more unnecessary inclusion to the narrative. Masterson was an acknowledged outlaw and not the defender of the law he is portrayed as here. Masterson had left Tombstone in the weeks preceding the gunfight. The inclusion in the narrative of John Ringwald *aka* Johnny Ringo (1850-82) is historically unnecessary and his inclusion is simply because he was a popular figure in the Western Legends. Ringo did appear in Tombstone but some months after the gunfight when he was found propped up dead against a tree. Nobody knows what had actually happened but popular myth has it that Wyatt Earp sneaked back into Tombstone and killed Ringo, although it is said that Ringo shot himself following a bout of depression.

Laurence Payne plays Ringo superbly with an air of charming menace in what is easily the best of his three roles in the series. Rex Tucker originally offered the role to Patrick Troughton, who was unable to accept. This is a blessing, for as versatile an actor Troughton is, one feels that his diminutive stature would not have captured the menace of Johnny Ringo that Laurence Payne succeeds in doing so successfully.

As minor characters go, Charlie the Barman is superbly played by David Graham with far more charisma and subtlety than he would play Professor Kerensky in *City of Death* 13 years later.

The real gunfight at the OK Corral lasted no more than 30 seconds but on screen we get a good ten minutes of rather slower action. However, unlike most of Cotton's inaccuracies in this story, this is acceptable as it creates an atmosphere of tension within the narrative and if the screen gunfight had lasted 30 seconds then it would have looked rushed and badly directed.

Cotton's interpretation of Pa or Old Man Clanton *aka* Newman Haynes Clanton is close enough other than the fact that Old Man Clanton died in August 1881 in an apparent revenge attack 12 days after he was believed to have been behind the ambush of a wagon train carrying a group of Mexican smugglers in

Skelton Canyon. Clanton was one of an ambushed group and when gunned down fell over the fire where he was rustling up breakfast. It is a tribute to Sonia Markham's excellent make-up that as Pa Reed De Rouen looks a lot older than the 45 years he was at the time.

Alas, Reed De Rouen gives the outstanding performance of the Clanton family in the story. William Hurndell as Ike and Maurice Good as the fictional Phineas are no more than one-dimensional stereotypical heavies who have their moment of glory right at the beginning of the story riding into Tombstone and shooting the population sign. Following that they are scarcely memorable.



Another would-be writer, the late Victor Carin, has little to get his teeth into with the character of Virgil Earp in Episode 4, but other than playing a rather dumb policeman in the Anthony Valentine series *Raffles* in 1976-77, Carin would find his forte as a writer, becoming the first script editor of the Scottish soap *Take the High Road* in 1980.

Sheena Marsh is superb as Doc's girlfriend Kate Fisher and one assumes, considerably more attractive than Doc's real girlfriend Kate Elder who was known as Big Nosed Kate. Marsh plays Kate Fisher as a very feisty woman and one of the very few people in the story to have any conscience at all. She is appalled when Holliday gives the Doctor his gun, knowing full well that the Doctor is almost certainly heading for his death.

Of the regulars, Jackie Laine and Peter Purves seem ill at ease in this story, not suprising as their dialogue and the bizarre things they are given to do, such as Purves' tuneless singing and Laine's piano playing (which was actually played off-camera in the actual episode by Tont McCall and in the reprise in the next episode by Winifred Taylor who would appear as a pianist

in the Thames series *The Mind of Mr J G Reeder* in 1969.) are utterly nauseating and with their departures from the series imminent, one cannot help but wonder if Lloyd and Davies deliberately set out to make laughing stocks of them!

With the Clantons having kidnapped Steven and Dodo, the Doctor is sent by Masterson and Earp, here showing about as much consideration for the Doctor as Holliday had done earlier in the story, to rescue them with Masterson's offer of a fair trial rather than bloodshed, but by this time the Clantons and Ringo have already left for Tombstone.

William Hartnell on the other hand is obviously having a whale of a time. He had not got on well with John Wiles and it was Hartnell who had suggested doing a Western story. With an experienced director like Rex Tucker at hand, Hartnell seems much more relaxed and at ease and is obviously enjoying himself, playing the Doctor with more vitality than had been seen in the series for quite some time. His performance is a joy to watch.

The story indicates that all the Clantons were killed. Yet, considering as we know Old Man Clanton was already dead at the time of the gunfight, and Ruben and Phineas Clanton were products of Donald Cotton's imagination, the only real casualty in the story is Billy Clanton who was, according to some myths, killed by Holliday, whilst in others he was merely wounded and, after the fighting had ceased, was still asking for another pistol. In reality, Ike Clanton and Tom McLaury were unarmed. Ike ran away successfully, but McLaury was shot in the back by Holliday.

The fact that the law was as corrupt as any rogue cowboy in 1880s Tombstone was borne out by how the Earps and Doc Holliday were arrested for the murders of the Clantons and McLaury's, but the presiding judge was related to Earps and 'decided' that the defendants had acted justifiably, which it has to be said, considering the Clantons' reputations, may indeed have been the case.

All this shows that *The Gunfighters* is mostly historically inaccurate. That said, it is still an entertaining and exciting piece of television given the limited and studiobound resources the production team had to work with. The story is most certainly NOT the turkey it is believed to be. As John Nathan-Turner would say 20 years later – the memory DOES cheat.

| Gary Phillips



**FIVE WINDOWS INTO HELL,  
FIVE DOORWAYS INTO DAMNATION.**

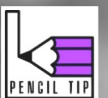


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